



U.S. AIR FORCE



# ARCTIC RESOURCE COMPILATION

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## Social Issues in the Arctic Region

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*Luis A. Rojas, Contractor  
Research Analyst  
Metro Professional Services*



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## **Preface**

This report creates a catalog of resources for use on the topic “Social Issues in the Arctic Region.” This catalog of resources is in response to a request by the U.S. Air Force (USAF) Air University (AU) Academic Centers, USAF Culture and Language Center (AFCLC) at Maxwell Air Force Base (AFB), Alabama and is in support of the AFCLC mission.

The mission of the AFCLC is to serve as the USAF focal point for creating and executing programs that sustain career-long development of Linguistically, Regionally, and Culturally competent Total Force Airmen to meet the Service’s global mission. In addition to providing subject matter expertise and support for Air Force Language, Regional Expertise, and Culture (LREC) governance, the AFCLC accomplishes this mission by designing, developing and delivering: 1) LREC familiarization education to AU officer, enlisted, and accessions programs; and 2) pre-deployment training and training products.

As a Research Analyst for Metro Professional Services, the researcher has identified open source material on Social Issues in the Arctic Region by using multiple sources during his research. This catalog includes academic journal articles, books and other legitimate peer-reviewed, academic resources. Sources are categorized by topic and broken down into relevant sub-topics based on the request of the AFCLC representative or on the discernment of the researcher. Catalog entries include Title, Author, Source, Date and Content Abstract, Summary or Overview that gives the end user a sense of what the author has to say about the selected topic and sub-topic. **The text used in this compilation is taken verbatim from the source, and none of this information is intended to be viewed as a product of AFCLC or Metro Professional Services. Incorporation in this compilation does not constitute endorsement of the source by AFCLC.**

## **Overview of Arctic People (Indigenous & Non-Indigenous):**

**“Arctic,” World Wildlife Fund [1] <https://www.worldwildlife.org/places/arctic>**

### **Overview:**

The Arctic is a region like no other in the world and it's warming twice as fast, bringing with it rapid change impacting life on land and at sea.

About 4 million people live in the Arctic, spread out over eight countries, including the United States. Varied landscapes—from the sea ice to coastal wetlands, upland tundra, mountains, wide rivers, and the sea itself—support abundant wildlife and many cultures. Of all the wildlife in the Arctic, the polar bear is the most fitting icon for this region. It's amazing adaptation to life in the harsh Arctic environment makes it an impressive species.

Within America's Arctic, the remarkably productive waters of the Bering Sea attract marine mammals, such as gray whales, which travel great distances to forage and raise their young. Almost half of the fish caught in the United States comes from here making fisheries vital to local livelihoods. Across the Bering Sea in Russia, the Kamchatka Peninsula's River systems produce up to one-quarter of all wild Pacific salmon. The salmon provide nourishment to other wildlife, including the Kamchatka brown bear.

The Arctic, including the Bering, Beaufort and Chukchi seas, now faces an uncertain future due to climate change, mining, shipping, oil and gas development, and overfishing.

### **Current & Relevant Information:**

#### **Living in the Arctic**

In the Arctic, nature operates at extremes. The climate is intense, landscape often treacherous and weather can be brutal. No matter the season, everyday life for the 4 million people living in the region is inextricably linked to the environment.

As a rapidly warming climate brings on new conservation challenges, these problems impact both people and the nature. Shrinking sea ice forces polar bears to spend more time on land, and people and bears can come into conflict. New ambitions to drill for oil and gas bring never-before-seen risk to regions that are home to some of the most pristine habitats (or landscapes) and unique wildlife on the planet.

Arctic indigenous peoples are acutely aware of these growing tensions. They've lived off the land and hunted animals for food, clothing, and other essential uses for generations. Such a way of life is threatened almost daily by climate extremes.

The Arctic Council reports that roughly 400,000 indigenous people live throughout the Arctic. They speak over 40 languages, some of which have few remaining speakers. Still, estimating numbers of Indigenous people in the Arctic is difficult. Not everybody collects the numbers, and different countries define “indigenous” differently.

**“Arctic Indigenous Peoples,” Arctic Centre University of Lapland [2]**  
<https://www.arcticcentre.org/EN/arcticregion/Arctic-Indigenous-Peoples>

#### Overview:

Indigenous peoples have inhabited the Arctic for thousands of years. The proportion indigenous people is estimated to be about 10 percent of total population living in arctic areas. There are over 40 different ethnic groups living in the Arctic. **Map with fact boxes on Indigenous peoples** who are permanent participants at the Arctic Council.

#### Current & Relevant Information:

Arctic indigenous peoples include for example Saami in circumpolar areas of Finland, Sweden, Norway and Northwest Russia, Nenets, Khanty, Evenk and Chukchi in Russia, Aleut, Yupik and Inuit (Iñupiat) in Alaska, Inuit (Inuvialuit) in Canada and Inuit (Kalaallit) in Greenland. All of the above-mentioned countries except Iceland have indigenous peoples living within their Arctic territory. Official statistics do not necessarily recognize indigenous populations separately, although differences occur. The number of indigenous people is not accurate because of the definition of indigenousness. **Demography of indigenous peoples of the Arctic based on linguistic groups.**

There is a great variation of cultural, historical and economic backgrounds among the groups. However, a common feature for most of the indigenous communities in the Arctic is that they have already undergone substantial changes due to the globalization of the western way of life, state policies, modern transport and the introduction of mixed economy.

In general, indigenous people have a specific connection to land that they have inhabited. Other features, for example distinct language, culture and traditional livelihoods such as reindeer herding, fishing and hunting are characteristics of indigenous people in the Arctic. Industrialization, social change and environmental problems such as climate change, however, present threats to the continuity of these livelihoods and culture.

Recently, political organization of indigenous peoples has led to international recognition and clarification of human and political rights concerning indigenous populations. Rights to land and natural resources are an important part of the culture and survival of indigenous peoples in the Arctic.



## Settlement in the Arctic regions

Arctic areas are inhabited approximately by four million people according to the **AHDR definition** (Arctic Human Development Report) of the Arctic. The settlement area is divided between eight Arctic countries; Canada, United States, Russia, Finland, Sweden, Norway, Iceland and Denmark. The circumpolar region is extremely sparsely populated. Using more broad definition, according to the University of the Arctic Atlas, there are approximately 13.1 million people living in the area of the circumpolar North, see the map **Indigenous population in the Arctic**.

During the 1950s and 1960s, the number of Arctic people started to grow rapidly because of improved health care for indigenous populations and the discovery of vast natural resources located in North which led to a large influx of immigrants. Recently population growth in the Arctic has slowed down in general and in some cases (e.g., Russian North) the total population has been even declining. It is estimated that two thirds of the total population live in relatively large settlements. The settlement of the indigenous peoples living in circumpolar countries is characterized by small, widely scattered communities.

**“Who Are the Indigenous Peoples of the Arctic?” Wonderopolis** [\[3\]](https://wonderopolis.org/wonder/Who-Are-the-Indigenous-Peoples-of-the-Arctic)  
<https://wonderopolis.org/wonder/Who-Are-the-Indigenous-Peoples-of-the-Arctic>

### Overview:

Have You Ever Wondered...

- How long have people lived in the Arctic?
- How many cultures live in Arctic zones today?
- How is climate change affecting the Arctic?

### Current & Relevant Information:

Where exactly is the Arctic? It isn't marked by a border or line of latitude. Instead, it is the region of the world surrounding the Arctic Ocean. In general, this zone includes land that is too far north to support most agriculture.

Today, around four million people live in the Arctic. About 10 percent of them belong to Indigenous cultures that have long lived in the region. In fact, the Arctic is home to more than 40 ethnic groups. They live across Alaska (U.S.A.), Canada, Greenland, Finland, Sweden, Norway, and Russia.

The Indigenous cultures of the Arctic are widespread and varied. They include the Inuit people, a culture made up of several unique groups across Canada, Greenland, and Alaska. Others include the Saami, Aleut, Yupik, Chukchi, and several other Indigenous groups.

Each of these cultures has its own unique customs and traditions. However, they also have a lot in common with one another. For instance, all Indigenous groups living in the Arctic have a close relationship with the land they live on.

If you're used to a warmer climate, the Arctic region may seem inhospitable. But to the Indigenous people who have lived there for generations, it's plentiful. If you live in the region, you know it's full of resources. You just need to know where and when to look for them.

Most Arctic peoples engage in hunting and fishing. These activities are a main source of food. After all, it's difficult to grow crops in the region! Many Indigenous cultures in the area also herd animals such as reindeer.

Today, Arctic Indigenous people have another thing in common: the effects of climate change. The warming climate has led to melting permafrost. It has also caused changes in the migration patterns of many animals. This affects people's way of life and access to food sources.

Many Indigenous cultures of the Arctic have spoken out about the effects of climate change. Their advocacy resulted in the Arctic Climate Impact Assessment. Completed in 2005, it was the first report of its kind. It outlined the impacts of climate change on the Arctic and made the case for protections.

Today, the Indigenous peoples of the Arctic continue to live in harmony with the land. Many continue to push for environmental protections. And, of course, they carry on the customs and traditions that have been passed down for thousands of years.

What traditions run in your family? Is the area you live in affected by climate change? Today, take some time to learn more about a culture different from your own. You may just find something you have in common!

**“Arctic Peoples,” Arctic Council** [4] <https://www.arctic-council.org/explore/topics/arctic-peoples/>

Overview:

## THE ARCTIC COUNCIL AND ARCTIC PEOPLES

To cater for the differing needs of Arctic inhabitants, the human dimension of the Arctic Council's work covers a wide array of areas, from mental and physical health and well-being, to sustainable development, local engagement, education, youth and gender equality. Arctic Peoples are represented in the Council by the [Permanent Participants](#), and their work is supported by the [Indigenous Peoples' Secretariat](#).

Current & Relevant Information:

The Arctic is home to almost four million people today – Indigenous Peoples, more recent arrivals, hunters and herders living on the land and city dwellers. Roughly 10

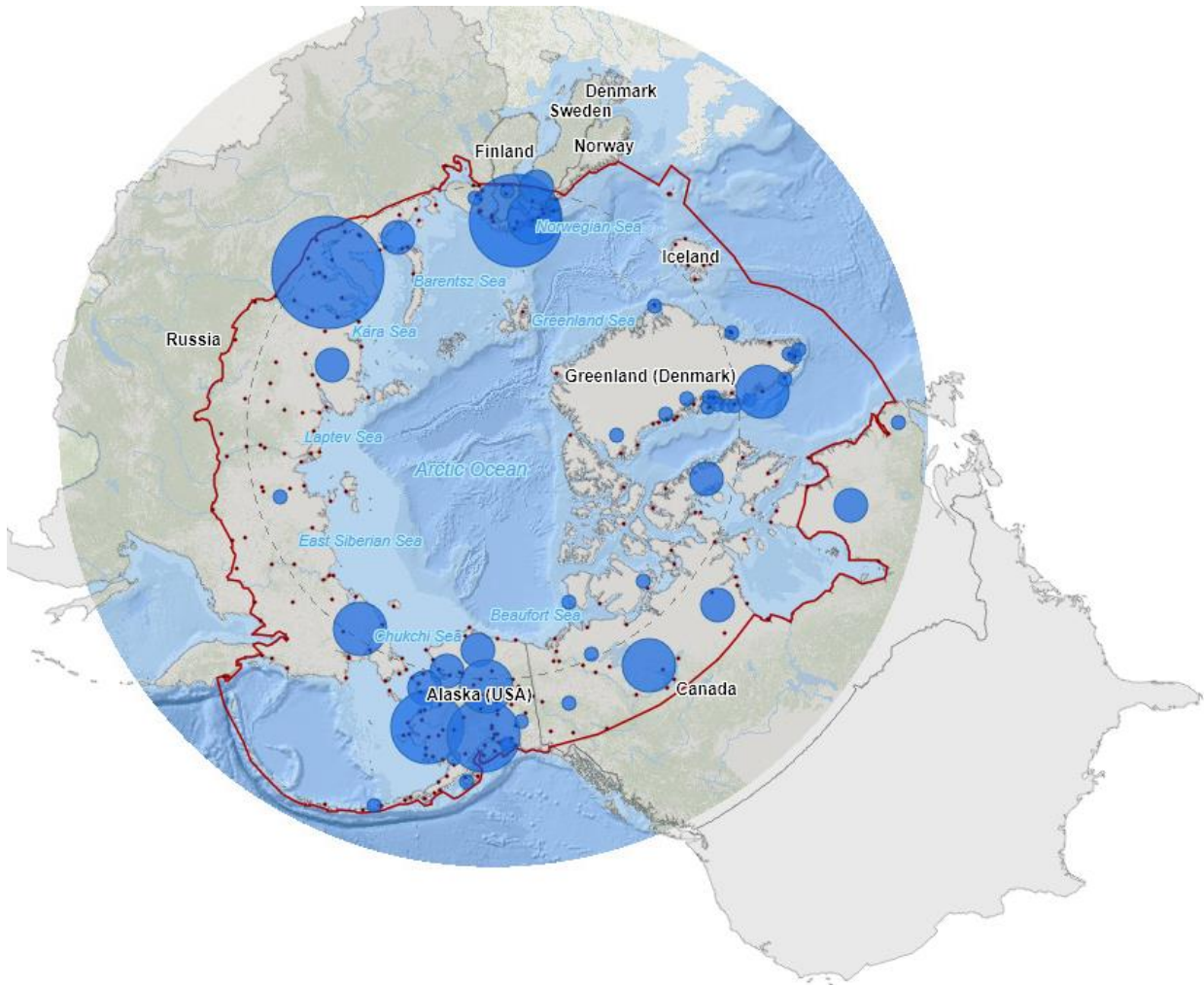
percent of the inhabitants are Indigenous and many of their peoples distinct to the Arctic. They continue their traditional activities in the context of an ever-changing world. Yet, as the Arctic environment changes, so do livelihoods, cultures, traditions, languages and identities of Indigenous Peoples and other communities.

Changes in the Arctic affect inhabitants in various ways. Arctic communities are already facing challenges that result from the impacts of climate change, demonstrating the need for action to strengthen resilience and facilitate adaptation. At the same time, the Arctic offers potential for sustainable economic development that both brings benefits to local communities and offers ground for innovation transcending the region.

**“Indigenous Peoples of the Arctic,” GRID-Arendal, 2016 [5]**

<https://www.arcgis.com/apps/Cascade/index.html?appid=2228ac6bf45a4cebafc1c3002fef0c4>

Overview:



Indigenous Peoples have lived in their Arctic homelands for millennia. The land and waters of the Arctic anchor indigenous societies. They provide resources upon which their cultures continue to survive.

Map above showing the Indigenous population distribution in the Arctic (blue circles) by region and the Arctic boundary (red) according to the Arctic Monitoring and Assessment Programme (AMAP). Sources: AMAP, Natural Earth.

#### Current & Relevant Information:

#### **The Arctic Council**

The **Arctic Council** is an intergovernmental cooperative forum focused on environmental and sustainable development issues. Its founding document is the **Ottawa Declaration**, a political agreement. The Council is unique in that it provides a place for the Arctic states, Arctic Indigenous Peoples and other inhabitants to discuss Arctic issues. The Arctic Council is not a treaty-based organization and

operates by consensus. It makes recommendations to governments but has no power to enforce action.

### **Permanent Participants**

Permanent Participants are organizations representing Arctic Indigenous peoples in the Council. They are supported by the Indigenous Peoples Secretariat.

#### **Aleut International Association (AIA)**

There are about 19,000 Aleuts in the United States and Russian Federation living on a chain of islands that stretch between the North Pacific and Bering Sea from southwest Alaska to Russia. They speak mostly English and Russian. Eastern Aleut is the dialect of the Aleut language with the most speakers, with several other endangered or extinct dialects. The Aleut International Association was formed in 1998 to address the environmental and cultural concerns of the Aleut People who have been living in the Bering Sea region for millennia.

#### **Arctic Athabaskan Council (AAC)**

AAC was formed in 2000 and represents approximately 45,000 people who traditionally live inland in a vast stretch of taiga and tundra. Their region has been continuously occupied for the last 10,000 years. AAC was established through a treaty signed by indigenous representatives from Alaska, and the Yukon and Northwest Territories in Canada.

#### **Gwich'in Council International (GCI)**

Approximately 9,000 Gwich'in live in small communities scattered across the Northwest Territories, Yukon and Alaska. GCI was established as a non-profit organization in 1999 by the Gwich'in Tribal Council to ensure all parts of the Gwich'in Nation in the Northwest Territories, Yukon and Alaska are represented at the Arctic Council.

#### **Inuit Circumpolar Council (ICC)**

The Inuit Circumpolar Council represents 160,000 Inuit living in four countries. Founded in 1977, ICC was one of the three original Permanent Participants at the Arctic Council (along with the Saami Council and the Russian Association of Indigenous Peoples of the North).

#### **Russian Association of Indigenous Peoples of the North (RAIPON)**

Indigenous Peoples live in approximately 60% of the territory of the Russian Federation, from Murmansk in the west to Kamchatka in the east. There are 40 different groups of Indigenous People in the Russian north with a total population of 244,000. The Russian Association of Indigenous Peoples of the North was founded in 1990 at the First Congress of Indigenous Peoples of the North of USSR and is an

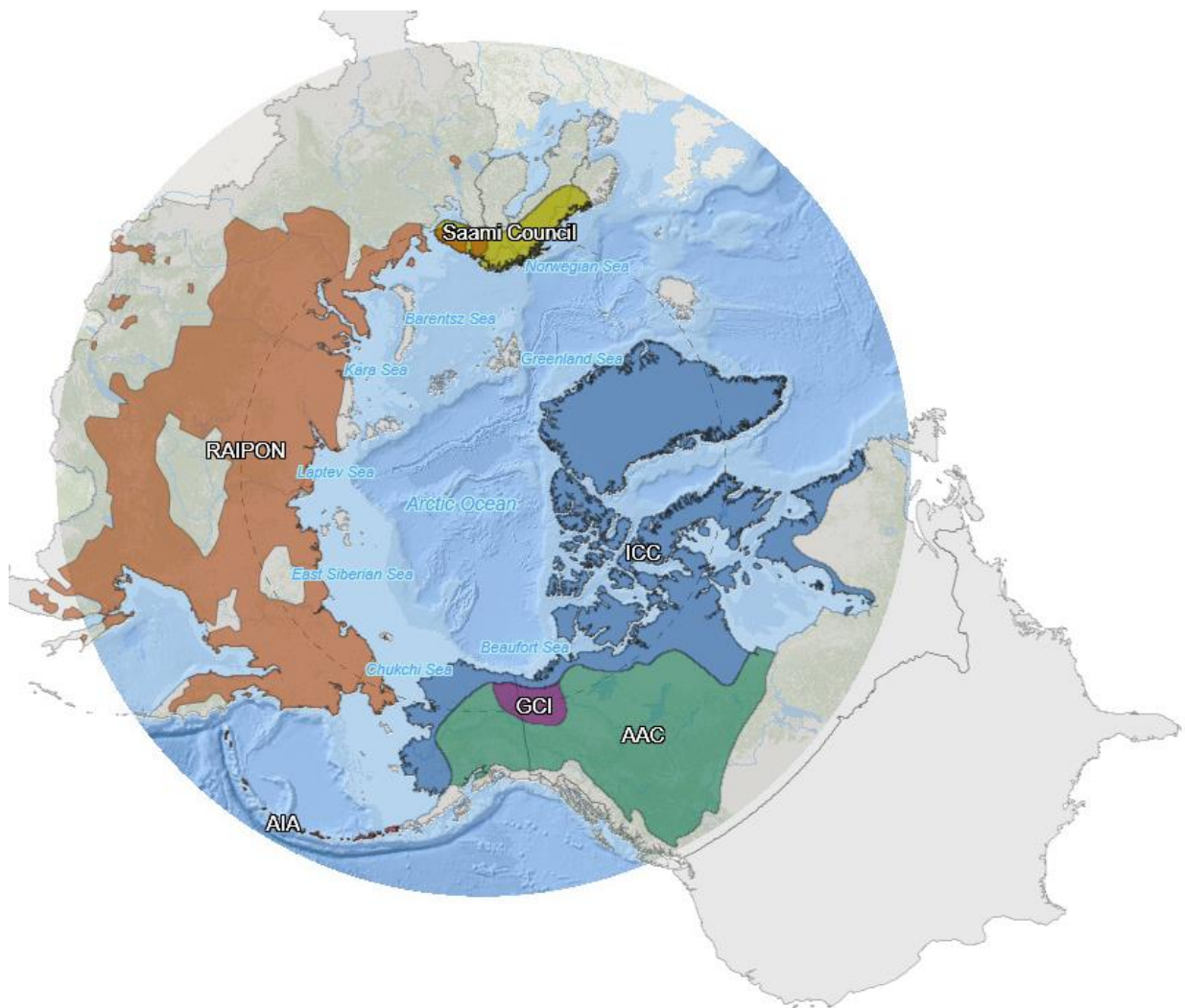
umbrella organization for 35 regional and ethnic organizations of Indigenous Peoples.

#### Saami Council International

The Saami Council was established in 1956, making it the oldest Indigenous Peoples Organization in the Arctic. The Saami Council was one of the three original Permanent Participants and represents approximately 100,000 in northern Norway, Sweden, Finland, and the Kola Peninsula in Russia.

#### Indigenous Peoples Secretariat (IPS)

IPS was established in 1994 under the auspices of the Arctic Environmental Protection Strategy (AEPS), the forerunner of the Arctic Council. The role of the secretariat is to facilitate contributions from the Permanent Participants to the cooperation of the eight Arctic states and to assist the Permanent Participants in their work, and provide them with necessary information and materials. IPS is now based in the offices of the Arctic Council in Tromsø, Norway.







The above map shows the many Arctic Indigenous culture groups and Indigenous languages. sources: CAFF, AMAP.

**“The people of the Arctic,” Don E. Dumond, et. al., Britannica, 5 December 2024**

[6] <https://www.britannica.com/place/Arctic/The-people>

Overview:



The Arctic, or circumpolar, peoples are the indigenous inhabitants of the northernmost regions of the world. For the most part, they live beyond the climatic limits of agriculture, drawing a subsistence from hunting, trapping, and fishing or from pastoralism. Thus, climatic gradients, rather than simple latitude, determine the



effective boundaries of the circumpolar region, and these gradients have their counterparts in the major environmental transitions. Of these transitions, the most important is the tree line, which marks the northern margin of the coniferous forest, or taiga. Between this limit and the coasts of the Arctic Ocean, the land consists of open tundra, though, in regions of high altitude, pockets of tundra lie enclosed within the forest zone.

Arctic environments are commonly imagined to be barren and inhospitable, habitable only by virtue of the extreme physical endurance and technical virtuosity of the peoples who dwell in them. Though their possession of these qualities is not in doubt, this view of the far north rests on a misconception. The image of the remote wilderness, to be conquered through a struggle for survival, belongs to the language of the alien explorer, not to that of the native. For indigenous people, the circumpolar environment is neither hostile nor forbidding but familiar and generous, offering the gift of livelihood to those who would treat it with consideration and respect.

Though there are indeed seasons of scarcity, these alternate with periods of extraordinary abundance. The continuous daylight of the warm Arctic summer, coupled with ample surface water from melting snow, allows for a phenomenal rate of growth of surface vegetation, and this in turn attracts a multitude of animals, many of them of migratory species. Warm ocean currents around some of the Arctic coasts are likewise conducive to an abundance of marine fauna. It is not, then, scarcity that characterizes the Arctic environment but rather its seasonality. The resources available for human subsistence—which are primarily faunal rather than vegetable—tend to occur in great concentrations at particular times of year, rather than being widely dispersed and continuously available. These fluctuations naturally affect the settlement patterns and movements of human populations, as do the marked seasonal variations in the length of day and night and in the opportunities afforded by the landscape for transport and travel.

#### Current & Relevant Information:

#### **Adaptations to local environments**

The three major environmental zones of forest, tundra, and coast, and the transitions between them, establish the range of conditions to which the ways of life of the circumpolar peoples are adapted. These conditions are strikingly uniform across both northern North America and Eurasia, and this uniformity is matched by remarkable similarities in cultural adaptation throughout the circumpolar region. Broadly speaking, it is possible to class these adaptations into four kinds. The first is entirely confined within the forest and is based on the exploitation of its fairly varied resources of land animals, birds, and fish. Local groups tend to be small and widely scattered, each exploiting a range of territory around a fixed, central location. The second kind of adaptation spans the transition between forest and tundra. It is characterized by a heavy, year-round dependence on herds of reindeer or caribou,

whose annual migrations from the forest to the tundra in spring and from the tundra back to the forest in autumn are matched by the lengthy nomadic movements of the associated human groups—whether these be of hunters (as in North America), who aim to intercept the herds on their migrations, or of pastoralists (as in Eurasia), who are in continuous association with them. The third kind of adaptation, most common among Inuit (Eskimo) groups, involves a seasonal movement in the reverse direction, between the hunting of sea mammals on the coast in winter and spring and the hunting of caribou and fishing on the inland tundra in summer and autumn. Fourth, typical of cultures of the northern Pacific coast is an exclusively maritime adaptation. People live year-round in relatively large, coastal settlements, hunting the rich resources of marine mammals from boats in summer and from the ice in winter.

### **Identification of Eastern and Western Arctic cultures**

In northern North America the forest and forest-tundra modes of subsistence are practiced only by Indian peoples, while coastal and coastal-tundra adaptations are the exclusive preserve of the Inuit and of the Aleut of the northern Pacific islands. Indian cultures are thus essentially tied to the forest, whereas Inuit and Aleut cultures are entirely independent of the forest and tied rather to the coast. Conventionally, this contrast has been taken to mark the distinction between peoples of the subarctic and those of the Arctic. Thus, in this article, of the indigenous peoples of northern North America, only the Inuit and Aleut are considered to be Arctic, whereas the Indian groups are dealt with separately in the article American subarctic people. A division of this kind, however, cannot be applied to the indigenous peoples of northern Eurasia. Apart from the Siberian Yupik (Eskimo), and perhaps some coastal Chukchi and Koryak inhabiting the northeastern tip of Siberia, there are no exclusively Arctic peoples in Eurasia. As among the Indians of the American subarctic, forest and forest-tundra adaptations predominate. For this reason, it has been necessary to treat the Eurasian Arctic and subarctic together as a single culture area. It should be noted, moreover, that the southern limits of this area are defined more by considerations of environmental adaptation than by culture per se. A number of Eurasian peoples are distributed over regions that span the transition between the taiga forest and the grassland steppe to the south. In such instances, only the forest-dwelling groups of these peoples will be considered here.

Apart from the absence of a cultural division corresponding to the environmental division between Arctic and subarctic, the north of the Old World is distinguished from that of the New in two major respects. The first lies in the domestication of the reindeer, the second in the history of settlement and European contact. The domestic reindeer is ubiquitous throughout Arctic and subarctic Eurasia (except the Pacific coast), whereas the North American caribou—which is virtually identical to the Eurasian wild reindeer—has never been domesticated. As a domestic animal, the reindeer is unusual both in that it has not been removed from its natural area of

distribution and in its lack of deviation from the wild form. Originally employed within the hunting cultures of the forest, the eventual consequence of its adoption was the emergence among the peoples of the forest-tundra transition, from Lapland to the Bering Strait, of a unique form of pastoralism. It also led to the disappearance of the wild reindeer from most of this territory, since the wild animals lost out in the competition for pasture. In the absence of the domestic deer, an equivalent form of pastoralism never developed spontaneously on the American continent. Attempts were made, at the end of the 19th century, to introduce reindeer herding into Alaska, using imported deer and herdsman, but they were notoriously unsuccessful.

As regards the history of settlement and contact, the most obvious difference is that the Russian exploration of Siberia was virtually complete at a time when the European exploration of northern North America had hardly begun. Although both movements of exploration were dominated by the fur trade and although it had very similar consequences for native communities on both continents, the former belongs to the earlier history of the trade, the latter to its later phases. In the European subarctic the contrast is even more striking, for there is a history of contact between its native people, the Sami (Lapps), and Finnish and Scandinavian settlers that dates back almost 2,000 years and that is part of indigenous cultural tradition. In the case of the Finns and the Sami, even the respective languages are closely related. This situation of continuous contact is a far cry from the encounter, in the North American Arctic, between Euro-Americans and Inuit, which brought together representatives of cultural worlds that, until that time, had had separate histories and had remained completely unaware of each other's existence.

### **Relations with the encompassing nation-states**

The eventual outcome of the history of contact on both continents, however, has been that indigenous groups have come into the knowledge not only of the world of their colonizers but also of one another. For the first time, for example, Sami people came to know of the existence of Inuit, and vice versa, and to realize that as the indigenous populations of their respective lands they share common problems, interests, and aspirations. This mutual awareness has been given political expression on an international level in the notion of the "Fourth World," uniting all such indigenous minorities encompassed within the boundaries of modern nation-states. Though the notion is intended to be of global application, its force has been felt above all in relation to the peoples of the north, in northwestern Europe and North America, all of whom presently find themselves citizens of Western liberal democracies and both beneficiaries and victims of the institutions of welfare capitalism that have been developed in these countries since World War II.

This points to one of the major criteria of the modern world for dividing the indigenous peoples of the circumpolar region—namely, the artificially imposed geopolitical division between East and West. The Sami, as citizens of the Nordic countries, have been much more closely identified with their counterparts in North

America than with the indigenous minorities of Siberia, for the recent history of the latter group was for decades shaped by its incorporation within the overall political and administrative framework of the U.S.S.R. Yet in both East and West the lands traditionally occupied by native groups have turned out to contain reserves of raw materials and energy vital to the industrial growth and prosperity of the encompassing states as well as to be of crucial significance for their strategic defense. This has brought money and jobs to the north, as well as the trappings of large-scale and advanced technology. But the jobs are largely filled, and the technology operated, not by native people but by a skilled immigrant workforce. Native people have become socially and economically marginalized in their own homelands.

It would be wrong, however, to conclude that the ways of life and livelihood of the indigenous peoples of the circumpolar north are bound to become things of the past, as natives abandon their “traditional” occupations of hunting, trapping, fishing, and herding and take to “modern” ways. Though it is true that northern native people have been quick to adopt certain elements of modern technology and consumer hardware, from snowmobiles to radios and televisions, this is because their use, alongside more traditional items, makes good practical sense in the context of everyday life. And, although the purchase of these and other items necessarily involves them to an increasing extent in the workings of a money economy, this involvement represents an attempt to sustain, rather than to abandon, a valued form of livelihood. People are not forced to make an all-or-nothing choice between the paths of tradition and modernity. Far from attesting to a state of transitional disorientation, as though suspended between two worlds and two times, such creative blends of the old and the new show that, for the peoples of the north, life is an ongoing concern. It is only because of the Western tendency to equate indigenous cultures with an exclusive adherence to tradition that they seem always to be on the point of disappearing.

**“Facts: Cold, Icy and Arctic,” Athropolis [7]** <https://www.athropolis.com/arctic-facts/fact-arctic-pop.htm>

#### Overview:

There are now approximately 4 million people living permanently in the Arctic, with the vast majority of them having come to the area as populations expanded elsewhere, access and communications were improved, and natural resources were exploited.

Discoveries of oil, minerals, and diamonds in the North, and a growing interest in Arctic tourism and ecotourism, are bringing many non-indigenous people to the Arctic to both visit and live.

Indigenous populations now range from about 80% in Greenland, 50% in Canada, 20% in Alaska, 15% in Arctic Norway and as little as 3-4% in Arctic Russia.

In contrast, Antarctica has no indigenous populations. The permanent human population of the Arctic - about 4,000,000. The Antarctic - 0.

**“Migration in the Arctic,” Timothy Heleniak, Arctic Yearbook, 2014 [8]**

[https://arcticyearbook.com/images/yearbook/2014/Scholarly\\_Papers/4.Heleniak.pdf](https://arcticyearbook.com/images/yearbook/2014/Scholarly_Papers/4.Heleniak.pdf)

Abstract:

People have been migrating to, from, and within the Arctic regions for centuries. Because of the small overall population size and small size of settlements, migration has a significant impact on overall population change and changing human capital in the Arctic. Much of the migration in the Arctic is driven by changing resource availability. This is true of the migration of Arctic indigenous peoples as well as the movements of outsiders. The various booms and busts of resources drive much of the migration in the Arctic, though climate change is having an increasing impact in some settlements. This chapter examines both internal and international migration movements in the Arctic. Internal flows are those within Arctic countries and regions and include movements up the urban hierarchy from smaller to larger settlements which is the predominate trend. International migration are flows to and from the Arctic from other countries. Flows of people from outside the Arctic to work in resource extraction projects have increased in recent years. Movement of Arctic natives to outside the Arctic has also become common resulting in a large Arctic diaspora population. Following discussion of broad migration flows is a disaggregation of those flows by age, gender, and level of education, key factors affecting human capital in Arctic regions and settlements. The focus of the paper is on how migration flows impact human capital in the Arctic both positively and negatively. Policies of Arctic countries and regions towards migration is examined as the state plays a larger role in impacting the spatial distribution of the population than elsewhere.

Current & Relevant Information:

**Introduction**

Since the time when the first humans crossed the Bering land bridge following the retreat of the last ice age, migration has played a large role in shaping the size, distribution, and composition of the Arctic population. The overall population of the Arctic is quite small and the sizes of even the largest settlements are not very large compared to those elsewhere in the world. Thus, the movement of people into or out of the settlements or regions in the Arctic has an enormous impact on the size and composition of the populations. This chapter provides an overview of recent trends and patterns of migration in the Arctic. It begins by examining some of the main factors influencing migration in the Arctic, followed by a comparative look at

migration across the region, followed by a region-by-region analysis of migration across each Arctic region.

## **Conclusion**

Based on current migration patterns in the Arctic several trends about migration in the future can be identified. This is already the case in many Arctic regions. First, even though there is increased attention to the Arctic and increased resource development, much of the resource development requires rather small and concentrated workforces, thus with a number of local examples, there is not likely to be a huge influx of people to the Arctic in the foreseeable future. According to projections in the forthcoming AHDR, the population of the Arctic is projected to increase only slightly from 4.0 million in 2010 to 4.2 million in 2030 (Heleniak, 2014). The period of rapid growth of the Arctic population from migration seems to be subsiding. Between 2000 and 2010, the population of the Arctic actually declined slightly, by 56,000 people or 1.4 percent. Second, in spite of the overall decline in migration into the Arctic, with more countries becoming interested in the Arctic, people from a wider variety of countries will come to the region, many as labor migrants. Third, as documented above in the section on migration in each Arctic region, there is a clear trend towards increased migration into the larger urban areas in the Arctic that is expected to continue.

## **1. Indigenous Groups Living in the Arctic:**

*[NOTE: 7 out of 8 Arctic countries have indigenous people living in the Arctic. Exception is Iceland]*

### **A. Aleut [Russia/US-Alaska]:**

**“Subsistence and Culture of the Aleuts as Island Dwellers: Ethnographical Viewpoint,” Minoru Ohshima, Center for Language Studies Otaru University of Commerce, 1996 [9] <https://core.ac.uk/download/pdf/59187799.pdf>**

#### **Overview:**

The Aleut people are now living in the Commander Islands in Russia, the Pribilof Islands, the Western part of the Alaska Peninsula as well as in the Aleutian Islands in the United States. Aleuts were forced to leave the Aleutian Islands and move to the Pribilof Islands after the discovery of the Pribilof Islands by Russians in 1780 (JOCHELSON 1868:43), to the Commander Islands from Atka and Attu in 1826 and to the Kuril Islands since 1828, including 30 people from Attu in 1872, then to the Commander Islands in 1888 to hunt sea otters for the Russian-American Company (JOCHELSON 1968:42-43). Excluding such dislocations, the Aleut original homeland is the Aleutian Islands and the Alaska Peninsula.

The Aleutian Islands are located north of 52 degrees north latitude stretching West to East in 30 degrees wide in longitude, dividing the Bering Sea from the north Pacific. Though geographically and in cultural areas the Aleutian Islands are

classified as Arctic, there exists no tundra (that is, free from permafrost) and no ocean ice except in the Cold Bay area on the Alaska Peninsula. The Islands may be thought to have an exceptional non-Arctic warmer environment in the Arctic cultural area because the cold water and winds of the relatively shallow Bering Sea meet the warm water and air of the Japan Current as it crosses the north Pacific above the extremely deep Aleutian Trench, both air turbulence and fog are formed in all seasons, and it is often called the 'birthplace of fog and wind.' The tide moving through narrow straits between some of the steep and sharp-edged islands becomes mountainous riptides (LANTIS 1984:161) especially on the Pacific side.

Native people living in the Aleutian Islands have been wholly dependent on local coastal and marine resources such as sea mammals, fish, sea birds, invertebrates and driftwood, and there are no trees growing in the islands. By using local resources through many generations, the Aleutian Islanders have elaborated special adaptation strategies, producing the Aleut culture from a general Eskimo base.

#### Current & Relevant Information:

#### **Conclusions**

To conclude the points discussed in previous sections I will sum up the interrelation of the six features proposed in the first section.

One important environmental feature in the Aleutian Islands is the isolation and localization of dwelling places but the Aleut people exploited their adjacent islands as fishing camps and hunting grounds beyond the limit of their homeland. Of course, this expansion of their activities was made possible by kayaks of the highest quality and their navigation techniques and knowledge. Building kayaks were made possible by driftwood and bentwood technology, and by large sea mammal hunting to supply enough skins.

Another feature of the island environment is their coastal zone complex enough but resourceful for a great of variety of "minor" activities, which made it possible to supply emergency food for people in the famines caused by their harsh climate which is the third feature of an island environment.

**“Interview: Native Perspectives on Sustainability,” Larry Merculieff and David E. Hall, silene.org, 2007 [10] [https://www.silene.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/02/Larry\\_Merculieff\\_interview.pdf](https://www.silene.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/02/Larry_Merculieff_interview.pdf)**

#### Overview:

DH (04:46): Please share a bit about yourself in terms of your heritage, where's home for you and focus of your life's work.

LM: (Aleut) What I said in my language, which is the Aleut language, Aleut people lived in the Bering Sea area for about 10,000 years. We still live there. In Aleut, my traditional name is Kuuyux, I come from the people of the sea lion. Sea lions are to

us are like the bison are to the plains Indians or the whales are to the Eskimos of the far north. My traditional name Kuuyux means extension like an arm extending out from the body and was given to me when I was four years old. It is given to one person in each lifetime, so my Kuuyux which was the older man, looked for me, found me and designated me the next Kuuyux when I was four.

My generation was the last generation to have a fully intact traditional upbringing. I spent equal amounts of time with every segment of the community. So, I spent equal amounts of time with the women, who took me out berry picking. I had to be there when they were preparing the foods, the wild foods that we ate. And with the men with hunting, fishing, and with the elders who would take me out camping, and would be there storytelling. To get to know my grandfather and for him to get to know me I had to spend 24 hours a day with him, 7 days a week, 365 days a year, for two years. I went to work with him. I went to bed with him. I went early in the morning out to the Bering Sea, where we'd take the Bering Sea water over our bodies, and praying towards the east as the sun rises. Then that very evening we might go to the Russian Orthodox church – he saw no real distinction between that, to terms of core spirituality that he was involved with. My Aachaa, I had a traditional relationship with an Aachaa, is a mentor type role of an older person with a younger person. My Aachaa picked me out when I was 5 years old and he taught me much of what I know about being Aleut about hunting about relationship to people, and about being a man, and relationship and understanding of nature. Yet literally from age 5 to age 13 he may have said no more than 200 words to me because words are considered in a traditional way not only to be superfluous but to diminish one's own understanding of things that are based on one's own inherent intelligence, of what we call the real human being.

**“Adapting to Environmental and Social Change: Subsistence in Three Aleutian Communities,” Jennifer Schmidt and Matthew Berman, University of Alaska, 2018**  
[11] <https://scholarworks.alaska.edu/handle/11122/8981>

#### Overview:

Our surroundings and society are both constantly evolving. Some changes are due to natural processes. People are responsible for other changes, because of what we do—for example, increasing the size of the population, expanding technology, and increasing mobility and connectivity. And some changes—like climate change—are due to a combination of natural processes and actions of people. In the Arctic, including the Aleutian Islands, marine and coastal ecosystems have seen the largest number of regime shifts with direct and indirect consequences for subsistence activities, commercial fisheries, and coastal communities (Council 2016). This paper describes current subsistence activities and changes local residents have observed over time in three Aleutian Island communities—Akutan, Nikolski, and Atka. As described more later, we did initial household surveys in 2016 and a second round in 2017, as well as more detailed interviews with some residents.



### Current & Relevant Information:

The Aleutians are an isolated group of islands extending 1,200 miles from southwest Alaska toward Russia (Figure 1).

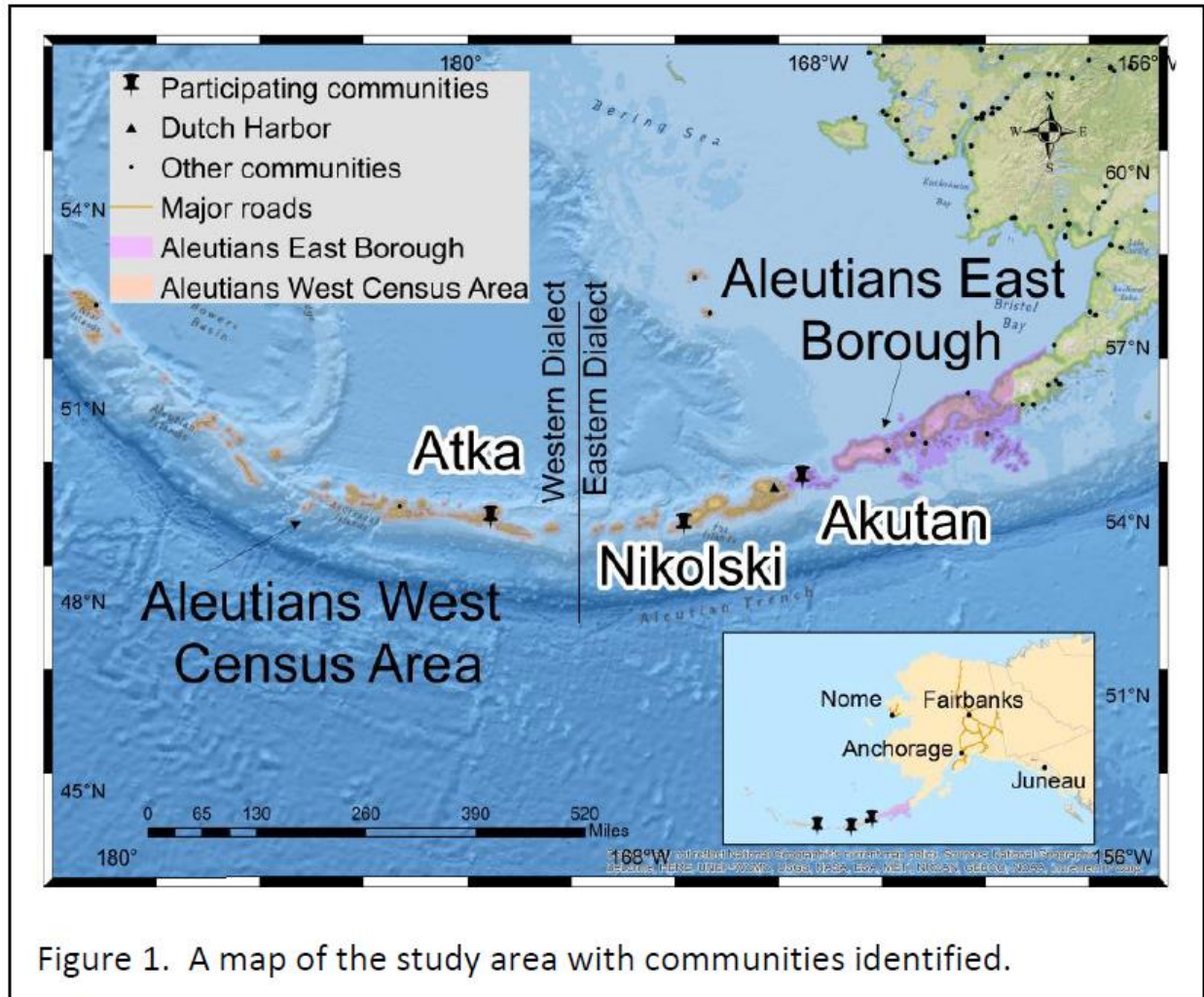


Figure 1. A map of the study area with communities identified.

Indigenous residents of these islands are predominately Unangan (Aleut), but they are varied. Historically they spoke nine distinct dialects (Bergsland 2001), but today there are two main dialects. Residents of Atka and Attu speak the Western dialect and residents of Nikolski and Akutan, among others, speak the Eastern dialect (Collins et al. 1945). Unalaska/Dutch Harbor is the largest community, with a population of about 4,600, and it is one of the top seafood producers in the United States (NOAA 2015). The smaller places have populations ranging from 22 in Nikolski to 626 permanent residents in Sand Point. (Sand Point, King Cove, and Akutan have fish processing plants, and counting plant workers inflates typical estimates of their populations.) For thousands of years residents of the Aleutians have lived off the bounty of the ocean for subsistence harvests, and also for commercial harvests since the arrival of outsiders. This area of Alaska was one of

the first to come in contact with outsiders—Russian fur traders in the 1700s—and thus the Aleut people have a long history with commercial harvesting (Reedy-Maschner 2010). But during World War II, many residents were forced to evacuate the islands, and the federal government sent them to internment camps in southeast Alaska. The entire original community of Atka was burned (U.S. Department of Health 1980). While the residents were gone, their villages were looted, the equipment they used for commercial and subsistence fishing was destroyed, and they lost continuity. Federal aid for re-building after the war was limited, and Aleutian residents were left at an extreme disadvantage for participating in commercial activities, compared with residents of other villages in southwest Alaska. That disadvantage has had lingering effects (Reedy-Maschner 2010).

**“Aleut Culture,” Eastern Aleutian Tribes [12]** <https://www.eatribes.org/culture/aleut-culture/>

#### Overview:

Aleut, a name given to the Unangan by the Russian fur traders, but who prefer to be called Unangan, are people who have had to and still currently rely on the sea for their livelihood. Unanga means the original people and Unanganin is the plural form. Unangan is another traditional name for them. Unanangan means Seaside. Unangax is the plural form for Unangan.

#### Current & Relevant Information:

Traditionally, Aleut Unangan men were the ones who hunted the seals, whales, sea lions, sea otters, sometimes walrus, and in some areas, they were the ones who hunted the caribou and bears. The Aleut Unangan women were in charge of gathering fish, birds, wild plant foods, and mollusks. The wild plant foods included berries and the weaving of fine grass basketry. Baidarkas are a one-man and two-man skin boat, these Baidarkas, along with kayaks, or large, open, skin boats were what the Aleut Unangan men used for hunting. Ivory, stone, and bone were all used in multiple ways. This included being incorporated into designs on containers, oil lamps, needles, awls, and other objects.

The first encounter that the Aleut Unangan people had with the Russian people colonizers was in 1741. This encounter happened when Vitus Bering led the expedition to the Aleutian Islands. Following the encounter, the Russians quickly established control, which can be attributed to a large party of Russian and Siberian hunters who caused severe injuries and death of the people in the Aleutian Islands in 1745 while they overwintered (spent the winter). Subsequent of the overwintering of the hunters, Russian courts found some hunters of the group guilty of cruelty.

Decades later the Russian trading companies treated the Aleut Unangan people as they treated their own rural people, as serfs (labor bound under the feudal system). Their labor was not tied to agriculture; it was tied to fur production. The Aleuts’

Unangans' traditional ways of life had been heavily disrupted from the Russians by the 1830s. In the later 19th century, more disruption occurred to the Aleuts' Unangans' ways of life due to the discovery of gold in Alaska. The discovery of gold in Alaska drew many prospectors to the region. Due to being under foreign control, the Aleut Unangan population had dramatically declined from a population of approximately 25,000 to 2,000 by the end of the 19th century.

By the late 20th century, the Aleut Unangan people were bringing back many traditional cultures. These traditional cultures were subsistence hunting and gathering practices, crafts, and their language. Today, most Aleuts Unangan peoples live a subsistence lifestyle. This includes fishing, hunting, and gathering berries. During the summer months, a large number of Aleut Unangan families spend their time harvesting traditional foods and preserving them for the winter.

#### Social Issues:

**“Arctic Social Indicators: Fate Control and material well-being,” Brynjar Helgi Ásgeirsson, Haskolinn A Akureyri, 2007 [13]**

[https://skemman.is/bitstream/1946/734/1/Arctic\\_Social\\_Indicators.pdf](https://skemman.is/bitstream/1946/734/1/Arctic_Social_Indicators.pdf)

#### Abstract:

A project like the Arctic Social Indicator (ASI) project is a ground breaking venture which could really make a difference in the lives of those that inhabit the Arctic.

In most nations, communities and societies there are indicators being used in order to monitor how societies are doing from year to year, decade to decade. These indicators are very important because they give us the status of numerous activities that affects our daily life, and they provide information that policy makers and community leaders use to determine what needs to be improved. Without such information it is hard to determine society's pros and cons. As of yet there are no indicators that are applicable to the Arctic, e.g., that can monitor human development accurately. It is therefore the aim of the ASI working group to construct a limited set of indicators that can be used by various stakeholders, including northern governments and the Arctic Council to help monitor and track human development in their communities, with these indicators being robust and accurate.

#### Current & Relevant Information:

##### **Introduction**

This thesis is about the current development in a project that is about creating a set of indicators to monitor human development within the Arctic, the Arctic Social Indicator Project (ASI). The goal of the ASI is to provide a limited set of indicators to help facilitate the monitoring and tracking of human well-being and the quality of life of the people of the Arctic and Sub-Arctic. The current status is the process of discovering/selecting possible indicators as well as the evaluation of them. Currently

the ASI working groups are in the process of doing this and the outcome will be revealed in the upcoming workshop that is to be held in Denmark in the summer of 2007.

The project faces numerous challenges which are in the process of being solved. Many of the existing indicators are not able to effectively gauge the Arctic communities or the lifestyle that the people live.

In the first chapter of this thesis there is a description of the Arctic Social Indicator project and why it is necessary that a special set of indicators is constructed for the people of the Arctic. Following this is a brief description about the Arctic, its geography and population and then a description of the Arctic Council, its purpose, its member states and permanent participants. In Chapter two I will discuss the need for indicators and then explain the procedure for constructing them. This will be followed by a description of the dimensions Fate Control and Material Wellbeing and what the possible indicators for these two dimensions are currently. I will further explain Gross Domestic Product, the subsistence economy and the difficulty of using the GDP indicator to measure the size of the Arctic economy. Chapter three will address the need for a participatory process in the quest for constructing the indicators, and what role the people in the community play, and also interviews with indigenous people and experts about the ASI that were conducted at the Arctic Council meeting in Tromsø, Norway. Finally, in chapter four I will discuss the current state of the ASI project and future developments on that front.

**“Educational Opportunities for Young People of Indigenous Minorities of the North: Social and Spatial Discourse,” Valerii V. Markin, Anatolii N. Silin, and Viktor V. Voronov, *Economic and Social Changes: Facts, Trends, Forecast, 2019***  
[14] [http://library.vscs.ac.ru/Files/articles/1576041475\\_141154\\_eng.pdf](http://library.vscs.ac.ru/Files/articles/1576041475_141154_eng.pdf)

Abstract:

The relevance of the problem considered in this article is due to the need to provide qualified personnel for investment megaprojects in the Arctic region, while preserving the traditional culture, language, and life values of indigenous peoples of the North. We use qualitative and quantitative methods of the sociological research we conducted in 2016–2017 on the territory of Yamalo-Nenets Autonomous Okrug of the Tyumen region of Russia: mass surveys of northerners, highlighting among them the indigenous peoples of the North, in-depth interviews of experts and so on. The analysis of scientific domestic and foreign literature on the subject of the study, including the study of Russian and foreign educational practices of different levels in the Arctic regions, allows us to assess the current level of training of qualified personnel for the Arctic. We substantiate possible ways to improve the system of ethno-regional education, assess the satisfaction of representatives of aboriginal ethnic groups with the system of general and professional education and its compliance with the desired future for their children. According to the results of the

study, we make the following conclusions. General and professional ethno-regional education for different levels of the Arctic Zone of Russia needs long-term state and non-state support, including corporate and non-governmental support associated with the prospective modernization of its entire system. It is necessary to strengthen the interaction of universities and other educational organizations with companies that participate in neo-industrial development of the Arctic with the aim of expanding the training of specialists in the industries related to the traditional life of indigenous Northern ethnic groups. Ethno-regional education in the Arctic region should be considered on the basis of the standards adopted by UNESCO for minority groups as an inclusive education having a status different from other educational organizations, taking into account the smallness of the majority of schools in Arctic settlements and nomad camps. At the same time, it is necessary to expand the range of educational opportunities for young people who belong to the indigenous peoples of the North.

#### Current & Relevant Information:

##### **Introduction**

Sociological diagnosis of the educational system, which is the most important element of human capital and potential, conducted by us in the Arctic circumpolar region on the basis of Yamalo-Nenets Autonomous Okrug (YNAO), situated in the Tyumen Oblast of the Russian Federation, demanded special attention for two of its subsystems: vocational secondary, higher education for the development of the largest hydrocarbon (oil and gas) resources and ethno-regional preschool, primary, secondary general education for children of northern indigenous peoples. In this paper, we rely on the 8-level classification of the Russian educational system in the format of the UNESCO international standard classification of education (ISCED). Levels 0–7 of ISCED 2013 are analyzed in detail.

The primary goals of this research are as follows: to substantiate the areas of ethno-regional educational system's improvement, to assess satisfaction of aboriginal ethnic groups' members with the system of general, professional education, and to assess the system's compliance with people's desired future for their children.

The relevance of this problem is caused by the necessity, on the one hand, to provide qualified personnel for this Arctic region's investment mega-projects and, on the other hand, to create environment for preserving traditional culture, language, life values of minor indigenous peoples of the North (SIPN). At the same time, it is necessary to extend the range of educational trajectories of young people who belong to indigenous people of the North.

Until 2014, oil and gas companies, participating in the Arctic projects, actively involved foreign specialists, who were ready to work in the exotic (for them) environment of the Far North, with the help of high salaries and additional social packages with low tax deductions. However, after the adoption of international

restrictions, many of them were made to leave Russia. A task of training domestic specialists became relevant. At the same time, importance of getting qualitative primary, basic, secondary general, vocational secondary and higher education by native northerners, while keeping the culture and language of their peoples, increased. We analyzed different foreign and Russian educational practices in the Arctic regions, conducted field sociological studies in YNAO, which allowed creating the bank of empirical information, necessary for finding a solution to this problem, conducting its sociological diagnostics, and suggesting some recommendations for power structures of YNAO and other stakeholders, which may be of interest to other Arctic regions.

It is worth mentioning that all the levels of education are open for SIPN representatives. However, its implementation on the scale necessary for the region faces several objective and subjective barriers. Objective ones are the attachment of SIPN to their traditional way of living; weak orientation of these peoples' representatives toward mastering industrial professions, entrepreneurship, etc.; Arctic companies, engaged in the extraction of raw materials, are poorly involved in professional orientation (industrial aspect) of SIPN. The main subjective barrier is that older generations of SIPN want to keep their identity. That is why they do not always want their children to be involved in new spheres of labor ("large world of professions"): they often do not come back to their families, to "minor world" of their people.

### **Literature Overview**

The experience of Alaska is interesting: the state government there provided all rural settlements with secondary schools for bilingual education. At the same time, the University of Alaska Fairbanks has six educational programs and nine separate courses in Alaska's indigenous peoples' languages. Most aboriginal languages and their dialects belong to the Eskimo–Aleut and Athabaskan–Eyak–Tlingit language macro-families. However, more than 2/3 of Alaska's indigenous peoples speak English at home and outside it. It is illustrative that in 2014 the Alaska Parliament approved the Alaska Native Languages Bill, which gave the status of state languages to 20 Alaska native languages, along with English.

However, this law was repealed in court on the federal level. It should be noted that 17 (out of 20) languages of Alaska's ethnic groups have less than one thousand speakers. The main problem of the Alaska's educational system here is the low academic performance of children from aboriginal ethnic groups and, as a result, their more frequent, in comparison with other students, expulsion from schools and colleges. Although, in recent years, scholarships from corporations and foundations have improved the situation.

**"Effects of Global Ecological Change on Arctic Council Permanent Participants," Erica Dingman, et al., German Institute of Development and Sustainability, 2014**



[15] <https://www.idos-research.de/en/others-publications/article/effects-of-global-ecological-change-on-arctic-council-permanent-participants/>

#### Overview:

Northern communities are highly vulnerable to Global Ecological Change (GEC): The Arctic is known as the region experiencing climate change twice as fast as other world regions. Arctic communities need to adapt to environmental changes caused by sea ice melt, natural changes such as variations in population and migration of wildlife, and contaminants in traditional foods. The new accessibility of Arctic regions has also opened up new economic opportunities (mining, oil and gas exploration, tourism and shipping), which pose additional environmental risks.

In the Arctic Council, an intergovernmental forum formed by the Arctic-rim states in 1996 to improve cooperation with regard to climate protection and security and to enhance the relation between Arctic-states and the indigenous peoples living in the Arctic, six indigenous peoples organizations have status of Permanent Participants: The Aleut International Association (AIA), the Arctic Athabaskan Council (AAC), the Gwich'in Council International (GCI), the Inuit Circumpolar Council (ICC), the Russian Association of Indigenous Peoples of the North (RAIPON) and the Saami Council (SC). Although they do not have voting (but consultation) rights, they represent 500,000 indigenous peoples living in the Arctic regions of Russia, Norway, Finland, Sweden, Denmark (Greenland), Canada, Iceland and the U.S at Arctic Council meetings and are recognized as full participants in all Arctic Council working groups. Although the ability of each community to cope and to adapt to GEC differs depending on the regional location and community setting, all of them need to respond in particular to the changes caused by humans in the Arctic. Through the indigenous peoples' organizations, they address the Arctic Council member-states to consider their positions. The following papers provide an overview on their positions on tourism, resource extraction and shipping in the Arctic region as can be found in the policy- and strategy papers of the six Permanent Participants to the Arctic Council.

#### Current & Relevant Information:

The Aleut peoples have lived on the Aleutian Islands of Alaska in the United States and in the Russian Kamchatka Krai for millennia. In both countries the health, economic well-being, and ways of life of the Aleut has been connected to the rich resources of the Bering Sea, on which their present maritime sociocultural identity is based. It is their main objective therefore to protect the Bering Sea marine habitat.

The Aleut community benefits from the resources of the region but also faces environmental problems caused by transboundary contaminants transport, climate change and commercial fisheries in the Bering Sea. The Aleut peoples address these challenges through their active collaboration with national governments, international decision-makers at the Arctic Council, to which the Aleut International

Association was admitted as a Permanent Participant in 1998, the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations, to which AIA was granted Special Consultative Status in 2004, as well as through their engagement at the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) and the Global Environment Facility (GEF).

The Aleutian/Pribilof Islands Association, U.S., and the Association of the Indigenous Peoples of the North of the Aleut District of the Kamchatka Region of the Russian Federation (AIPNADKR) share the following positions on tourism, shipping and resource extraction in the Arctic region:

In the Bering Sea, it is estimated that U.S. commercial fisheries are worth close to \$1 billion per year, and make up more than half of all annual domestic fish landings; in Russia, the fishery is worth about \$600 million a year, and makes up about a third of the country's fish harvest. In addition to the cultural relationship of the Aleut peoples with the marine ecosystems, fishing in the Bering Sea is thus a very important economic driver for the Aleut and particularly for the socioeconomic development of coastal villages along the Bering Sea. In order to conserve the Bering Sea fish, the Aleut developed individual fishing quotas (IFQ) that have been hailed as the most sustainable fisheries management plans worldwide. The Aleut promote the implementation of the IFQ throughout the Arctic Region in order to protect Arctic fish. As climate change heavily impacts the living structure of this marine resource, the Aleut also believe that the limitation of fishing supports Arctic fish in their adaption to climate change impacts.

Oil and gas leasing in the North Aleutian Basin within the 1998 Lease Sale 92 area (now called Lease Sale 214) is supported by the Aleut East Borough if residents of the Aleutians East Borough benefit from employment and business opportunities, and as long as exploration and development is conducted in an environmentally safe manner. Estimates predict that the basin contain 8.6 trillion cubic feet of gas and 750 million barrels of oil or condensate - resources that may be worth \$37 billion over the next 30 years.

With regard to tourism, the Aleut advocate Arctic tourism as long as tourism activities are carried out sustainably and do not endanger the Arctic environment. The Aleutian Pribilof Islands Association is working to develop eco-tourism, which can serve as an example throughout the Arctic region.

The Aleut generally support tourism, shipping and resource development in the Arctic region; however, maximum protection and priority must always be given to the fishery resources.

**“Cultural Heritage of the Aleuts,” Jeanette Wolak and Erin Klauk, Impacts of Resource Development on American Indian Lands, 6 November 2024 [16]**  
[https://serc.carleton.edu/research\\_education/nativelands/pribilofs/culture.html](https://serc.carleton.edu/research_education/nativelands/pribilofs/culture.html)



### Overview:

The Aleuts of Alaska are part of an ancient race of maritime peoples who settled in the Aleutians approximately 7,000 years ago (Langdon, 1978). Prior to European contact, the Aleuts inhabited all of the major Aleutian Islands, the Alaska Peninsula, and the Shumagin Islands south of the Alaska Peninsula (Langdon, 1978). Historians and archaeologists have estimated that the Aleut population was between 15,000-18,000 in the early 1700s. However, warfare, starvation, and epidemics caused by contact with Russian and European sailors decimated the Aleut population. The estimated number of Aleuts dropped to a few thousand by the end of the 18th century (Langdon, 1978).

Aleut hunters were taken from their homes in the Aleutians and brought to the Pribilof Islands by Russian fur traders in the 1700s. Permanent communities were established on St. Paul Island and St. George Island by the 1820s (Corbett and Swibold, 2000). The Aleuts in the Pribilofs were forced to hunt northern fur seals and sea otters for Siberian trading companies and later for the Russian American Company, which established a licensed fur-seal monopoly (Corbett and Swibold, 2000).

With the purchase of Alaska by the United State in 1867, Aleuts found themselves classified as 'Indians' and lost many of the rights they had enjoyed under Russian rule. The U.S. government's mistreatment of Aleuts continued into the 20th century. Many Aleuts were evacuated into internment camps during World War II and treated worse than Japanese and German prisoners of war (Corbett and Swibold, 2000).

### Current & Relevant Information:

The biggest challenge to Aleut communities today is a lack of economic opportunity in the Pribilofs and Aleutian Islands. Fishing has become the dominant industry, but smaller communities like St. Paul and St. George struggle to compete with commercial fisherman in the Bering Sea (Corbett and Swibold, 2000). Years of intensive fishing, combined with an overall climate change in the region threaten the wildlife and environment of the islands, home of the Aleuts.

**“Changes in Aleut Concerns Following the Stakeholder-Driven Amchitka Independent Science Assessment,” Joanna Burger and Michael Gochfeld, Risk Analysis, 2009 [17] <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC4300129/>**

### Abstract:

There is widespread agreement that stakeholders should be included in the problem-formulation phase of addressing environment problems and, more recently, there have been attempts to include stakeholders in other phases of environmental research. However, there are few studies that evaluate the effects of including stakeholders in all phases of research aimed at solving environmental problems. Three underground nuclear blasts were detonated on Amchitka Island from 1965 to

1971. Considerable controversy developed when the Department of Energy (DOE) decided to “close” Amchitka. Concerns were voiced by subsistence Aleuts living in the region, resource trustees, and the State of Alaska, among others. This article evaluates perceptions of residents of three Aleutian village before (2003) and after (2005) the Consortium for Risk Evaluation with Stakeholder Participation’s (CRESP) Amchitka Independent Science Assessment (AISA). The CRESP AISA provided technical information on radionuclide levels in biota to inform questions of seafood safety and food chain health. CRESP used the questions asked at public meetings in the Aleut communities of Atka, Nikolski, and Unalaska to evaluate attitudes and perceptions before and after the AISA. Major concerns before the AISA were credibility/trust of CRESP and the DOE, and information about biological methodology of the study. Following the AISA, people were most concerned about health effects and risk reduction, and trust issues with CRESP declined while those for the DOE remained stable. People’s relative concerns about radionuclides declined, while their concerns about mercury (not addressed in the AISA) increased, and interest in ecological issues (population changes of local species) and the future (continued biomonitoring) increased from 2003 to 2005. These results suggest that questions posed at public meetings can be used to evaluate changes in attitudes and perceptions following environmental research, and the results are consistent with the hypothesis that the AISA answered questions about radionuclides, and lowered overall concern about radionuclides, but left unanswered concerns about the health effects of mercury.

#### Current & Relevant Information:

##### **Introduction**

In this article the attitudes and perceptions of Aleut stakeholders are compared before (2003) and after (2005) the Amchitka Independent Science Assessment (AISA) was conducted (2004). The AISA was designed and executed by the Consortium for Risk Evaluation with Stakeholder Participation (CRESP) at the request of the State of Alaska and the Department of Energy (DOE) to provide the science necessary to understand whether subsistence and commercial marine organisms from Amchitka waters were safe to eat, to understand risk to the food chain, and to provide information on radionuclide levels in biota that could serve as a basis for a long-term biomonitoring plan at Amchitka. Amchitka was the site of three underground nuclear tests from 1965 to 1971. While no one currently lives on Amchitka Island, there are subsistence Aleut communities on the nearby islands of Adak, Atka, Umnak (Nikolski), and Unalaska in the Aleutian Chain of Alaska. Aside from issues of environmental justice that involve the potential disproportionate exposure of Aleuts to radionuclides via their subsistence foods, the Aleuts are also committed to protection of the marine ecosystem.

Particular interests for the study included: (1) whether Aleuts were concerned about radionuclides or other contaminants, (2) whether attitudes and perceptions changed

from 2003 to 2005, and (3) what the nature of the changes were with respect to contaminants, trust and credibility, health effects, and risk perception. The questions raised at public meetings held in three Aleut communities (Atka, Nikolski, Unalaska) were used as the database, and comparisons were made among questions asked before and after the AISA. The content of questions was examined to determine whether the types of questions asked differed from 2003 to 2005. This method of assessing perceptions and attitudes has the advantage of being spontaneous and not requiring long and lengthy questionnaires that Aleuts might refuse to answer, while providing a direct indication of their concerns and interests. The initial premise was that while people might ask more questions in 2005 than 2003 because they had become familiar with us as visitors, the nature of the questions should remain the same unless the AISA itself had effected a change in attitudes and perceptions. Thus, the null hypothesis is tested that there would be no change in concerns and perceptions from 2003 to 2005; the evaluation was thus of outcome.

Since one of the main objectives of the AISA was assessing whether the subsistence foods were safe with respect to radionuclides, one might predict that Aleuts would have fewer questions about radionuclides after the study than before. No such changes were expected for other contaminants that we did not measure (such as mercury or PCBs). We also predicted that people might be more interested in health effects in 2005 than in 2003 because we had discussed these issues with them. Particular interests explored in this study include determining whether trust and credibility remained the same in both years with respect to CRES (conducting the assessment) and DOE (responsible for the radionuclides at Amchitka). CRES made it clear that DOE was funding the study, but that CRES scientists were not a part of DOE.

**“Aleut Internment During World War II,” AlaskaWeb.org [18]**  
<http://alaskaweb.org/military/ww2aleutintern.html>

#### Overview:

Few Americans have heard of the "Aleutian campaign" or that Native islanders, the Aleut, were removed from their villages and left to languish in squalid relocation camps, bereft of adequate nutrition, medical attention, heat, running water, and toilet facilities. Historians have often referred to the Aleutian campaign as the "Forgotten War." It was fought on American soil, and American forces incurred heavy losses along the 1500-mile front. The campaign also exacted a heavy toll upon the Aleut.

#### Current & Relevant Information:

Among the many tragedies and conflicts of World War II, the story of the Alaskan Aleuts' evacuation is usually overlooked or forgotten. Alaska's Aleutian Islands are a string of more than 200 islands that arc like a thousand-mile strand of pearls between the Bering Sea and the North Pacific Ocean. The Aleutian archipelago endured many changes but one of the most dramatic was the departure of the native

Aleuts from their homeland. The Aleuts faced many conflicts throughout their evacuation: the clash of cultures, the struggle to manage in a foreign, inadequate and often hostile environment, and the battle over their rights as citizens.

On 28 November 1941, the War Department was warned by Army Intelligence that a Japanese attack on Alaska was eminent. In response nearly 41,000 troops were stationed in Alaska by April, 1942. On 3 June 1942, the Japanese bombed Dutch Harbor, and soldiers on Kiska and Attu. Dutch harbor was the principal U.S. military outpost in the Aleutian chain. Its depth accommodated large ships, and its location, between the Bering Sea and the Pacific Ocean, was thought strategic in any military conflict involving the U. S. and Japan.

The Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor in Hawaii in December 1941 confirmed those fears and escalated the stakes in the Aleutian chain. The U. S. had begun a frantic build-up of the Dutch Harbor area in 1941, constructing air and naval bases where large numbers of troops could be stationed. After Pearl Harbor, Japan's goals in the Pacific theater were to neutralize the growing U. S. presence in the Aleutians while establishing naval supremacy by securing Midway Island, an ideal location for naval aircraft carriers. Japanese commanders resolved to launch an offensive on the Aleutians, which they hoped might deceive the U. S. about a simultaneous "sneak" attack on Midway. Their ultimate goal was not to use the Aleutians as a launching post for attacks on the U. S. mainland, but simply to prevent the U. S. from using them to invade Japan. Despite having cracked the Japanese war codes by the spring of 1942, the U. S. was unaware of the Japanese goals and in any event did not want any Japanese presence in the Aleutian chain.

Beginning in March of 1942, American military intelligence had warned Alaskan defense officials that a Japanese attack was likely along the 900-mile island chain. On June 3, Japanese planes bombed American facilities at Dutch Harbor and then several days later, Attu and Kiska islands were invaded.

Dutch Harbor was bombed by Japanese forces on June 3rd and 4th, 1942. Forty-two Americans were killed, 64 were injured, and ten U. S. aircraft were lost. The result was that when, on June 7th, Japanese forces invaded the islands of Kiska (largely uninhabited) and Attu, Atka - an island 600 miles west of Attu with a sheltered harbor - seemed next in line, with Unalaska to follow.

More than 40 villagers were captured on Attu and spent the rest of the war in prison camps in Hokkaido, Japan. Barely 20 would survive the ordeal and return to Alaska. After the invasion, American officials ordered the rest of the small villages in the chain to be evacuated.

American authorities made one of the most controversial decisions of World War II - to relocate the residents of the Aleutians to Southeast Alaska.

Various representatives of U. S. agencies, including the Department of the Interior, the Alaska Fish and Wildlife Service, and the Alaskan Office of Indian Affairs, as well as Governor Gruening weighed in on the discussion of whether to evacuate Aleuts and where they should go. That discussion was still ongoing in July 1942, even though Navy transports had begun the evacuation a month earlier and even though no concrete plans had been made for exactly where the evacuated Aleuts would be housed. All the discussants anticipated that it would be somewhere in Southeast Alaska because of its relative accessibility to the Aleutians and somewhat moderate climate, but no facilities for house the Aleuts had been prepared.

At that point, a search began for abandoned canneries or warehouses to house the Aleuts. Eventually five "campsite" locations were identified: Funter Bay and Killisnoo, west of Admiralty Island; Wrangell Institute, a stopover site on Wrangell Island, southeast of Admiralty Island; Burnett Inlet, a permanent campsite on Wrangell Island; and Ward Cove on Revillagigedo Island, where the town of Ketchikan was located. Decisions to locate particular groups of Aleuts at particular campsites were made while the private and Navy transport ships carrying the groups were wending their way northeast from the Aleutian chain. As a result, the ships stopped in various places as their itinerary was being figured out. Conditions on the ships were crowded; food was scanty; the weather, even in June and July, was sometimes inclement, the threat of war hovered over the ships; passages, and the Aleut passengers were not allowed to take many of their belongings.

Thus, although those inhabitants of the Aleutian and Pribilof islands who were evacuated to the U. S. fared, on the whole, poorly, those taken to Japan fared far worse. Further, the attitudes of the evacuating governments differed. The Japanese treated the Attuans as prisoners of war. American authorities evacuated and interned Aleuts in part for their protection. The U. S. government also paid for their food and lodging, made some effort to find them jobs, and after a timer, did not drastically restrict their ability to leave the camps. It also paid for the Aleuts' resettlement, and filed claims on behalf of the Attuans with a War Claims Commission, established by Congress in 1948. Twenty-three surviving Attuans or their descendants received payments under those claims in 1951, the largest amounting to \$2,358. The funds came from the sales of confiscated enemy property.

On 10 August 1988, public law 100-383 made restitution to the Aleuts for their years of personal loss by paying the 450 individual survivors \$12,000 each and creating a trust fund for communities and churches. The sum of \$6.4 million was appropriated for community use; \$5 million was for the six communities to use on projects designed particularly to benefit the elderly, students, and cultural preservation and \$1.4 million was to compensate for church property lost, damaged or destroyed.

After years of debate on the Senate floor S1009, the Civil Liberties Act of 1988, was passed. The government gave monetary reparations and a formal apology for their actions during the World War II Aleut evacuation.

Aleut Corporation was given \$15 million as compensation for Attu Island, which was occupied by the military after the war and remains closed to its former inhabitants. Attuans, seized by Japanese troops in June, 1942, and taken to POW camps in Japan, were resettled after the war at Adak, more than 500 miles from their home island.

#### B. Athabascan [US-Alaska]:

**“Exploring the Regional Village Sites: The Athabascan House,” Alaska Native Heritage Center, 3 July 2019 [19]** <https://www.alaskanative.net/exploring-the-regional-village-sites-the-athabascan-house/>

##### Overview:

The Athabascans traditionally lived in Interior Alaska, between the Brooks Mountain Range and the Kenai Peninsula. There are eleven distinct linguistic groups among the people who made their homes along the five major rivers: Yukon, Tanana, Susitna, Kuskokwim, and Copper. A nomadic people, Athabascans traveled in small groups to fish, hunt, and trap. Today there are approximately 16,000 Athabascans living in Alaska, and call themselves “Dena,” or “the people.” In the Anchorage area, the Dena’ina Athabascan people made their homes throughout has now become the largest urban setting in the state.

##### Current & Relevant Information:

The resources of the land are important to the Athabascan people, who are taught respect for all living things. Each year, summer fish camps were base for the people, who would move to a different location in the winter. Depending on the season and the resources available, the Athabascan people have multiple house types appropriate to the region and the weather.

The Athabascan people had ample access to stone, antlers, wood, and bone, and used them to make houses, boats, snowshoes, clothing, and household goods. Birch trees were a staple.

**“Athabascan,” Miranda Wright, Bernice Joseph, and Malinda Chase, Alaska Native Collections [20]**  
<https://repository.si.edu/bitstream/handle/10088/55391/crossroadsalaska00chau.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y>

##### Overview:

The Athabascan people of Alaska call themselves Den’a (“the people”). They speak eleven different languages, and the lands they call home range north to the Brooks

Range, east to the Canadian border, south to Cook Inlet, and west as far as the Nulato Hills. This expanse of territory is covered with low hills and flat lands, broken by the Alaska Range and shaped by extensive waterways including the Tanana, Kuskokwim, and Yukon rivers.

#### Current & Relevant Information:

Prior to contact, the land provided what the Den'a needed. Each regional band had its own territory, which was divided among several local bands consisting mainly of extended families. These bands followed established trails on their seasonal quest for food. Periodically they would "gather up" or assemble as a group for ceremonies throughout the year.

As dictated by past generations, the life cycle of contemporary Athabascans continues to flow with the seasons. Fall means intensive work during the moose or caribou hunt. As the days shorten and become colder, sewing and trapping occupy the hours as people prepare for a "give-away" ceremony. A renewal of energy is associated with spring, a time for goose and duck hunts, beaver trapping, and village carnivals highlighted by dog-sled races. Fishing, berry picking, construction, and picnics are activities associated with summer.

The worldview of the Den'a consists of a naturalistic explanation that links nature and life as one, a system that maintains unity in the human, natural, and spiritual worlds. In both the seen and unseen worlds all things have spirits and everything is connected. This holistic world view is implicitly expressed in Den'a ceremonies. It is explicitly expressed in the sharing of water and food, and often in the use of fire.

**"Athabascan Cultures," Alaskan-Natives.com [21]** <https://www.alaskan-natives.com/alaskan-native-cultures/athabascan-cultures/>

#### Overview:

Athabascan Indians live in interior Alaska and have the largest land base of any other Alaska Native group. The Athabascan are efficient hunters and fishers and the moose, caribou, salmon and the birch tree are the most important resources. These provide food, clothes and shelter. In summer, they spend a great deal of time at their fish camps along major river systems – including the Yukon, Tanana, Innoko, Chandelar, Koyokuk and Tolovana rivers. In winter, they hunt caribou, moose and smaller animals.

The Athabascan people traditionally lived in Interior Alaska, an expansive region that begins south of the Brooks Mountain Range and continues down to the Kenai Peninsula. There are eleven linguistic groups of Athabascans in Alaska. Athabascan people have traditionally lived along five major river ways: the Yukon, the Tanana, the Susitna, the Kuskokwim, and the Copper River drainages. Athabascans were highly nomadic, traveling in small groups to fish, hunt and trap. Today, the Athabascan people live throughout Alaska and the Lower 48, returning to their home

territories to harvest traditional resources. The Athabascan people call themselves 'Dena,' or 'the people.' In traditional and contemporary practices Athabascans are taught respect for all living things. The most important part of Athabascan subsistence living is sharing. All hunters are part of a kin-based network in which they are expected to follow traditional customs for sharing in the community.

#### Current & Relevant Information:

The Athabascans have matrilineal system in which children belong to the mother's clan, rather than to the father's clan, with the exception of the Holikachuk and the Deg Hit'an. Clan elders made decisions concerning marriage, leadership, and trading customs. Often the core of the traditional group was a woman and her brother, and their two families. In such a combination the brother and his sister's husband often became hunting partners for life. Sometimes these hunting partnerships started when a couple married. Traditional Athabascan husbands were expected to live with the wife's family during the first year, when the new husband would work for the family and go hunting with his brothers-in-law. A central feature of traditional Athabascan life was (and still is for some) a system whereby the mother's brother takes social responsibility for training and socializing his sister's children so that the children grow up knowing their clan history and customs.

**"Athabascan Culture," weebly.com [22] <https://athabascanculture.weebly.com/>**

#### Overview:

There are eleven groups of Athabascans in Alaska. The Athabascan people originally came from Asia approx. 35,000 years ago across the Bering Strait. The Athabascans themselves do not believe the migration story, rather they believe they have always been here. Recent evidence suggests that the migration across the Bering Strait went in both directions. The Athabascan people traditionally lived in Interior Alaska, a region that begins south of the Brooks Mountain Range and goes all the way down to the Kenai Peninsula. They traditionally lived along five major rivers: the Yukon, Tanana, Susitna, Kuskokwim, and the Copper River and migrated every season, moving with small groups to fish, hunt and trap.

#### Current & Relevant Information:

Typical Athabascan families consist of a mother, father, their children, and grandparents. The Alaskan Athabascans believe that a girl is ready to marry soon after she hits puberty. Her suitor is preferably someone who demonstrates excellent hunting skills, because men are responsible for hunting. The man works for his in-laws for a year or two before possessing his own home.



## Social Issues:

**“Effects of Global Ecological Change on Arctic Council Permanent Participants,” Erica Dingman, et al., German Institute of Development and Sustainability, 2014**

[23] <https://www.idos-research.de/en/others-publications/article/effects-of-global-ecological-change-on-arctic-council-permanent-participants/>

### Overview:

Northern communities are highly vulnerable to Global Ecological Change (GEC): The Arctic is known as the region experiencing climate change twice as fast as other world regions. Arctic communities need to adapt to environmental changes caused by sea ice melt, natural changes such as variations in population and migration of wildlife, and contaminants in traditional foods. The new accessibility of Arctic regions has also opened up new economic opportunities (mining, oil and gas exploration, tourism and shipping), which pose additional environmental risks.

In the Arctic Council, an intergovernmental forum formed by the Arctic-rim states in 1996 to improve cooperation with regard to climate protection and security and to enhance the relation between Arctic-states and the indigenous peoples living in the Arctic, six indigenous peoples organizations have status of Permanent Participants: The Aleut International Association (AIA), the Arctic Athabaskan Council (AAC), the Gwich'in Council International (GCI), the Inuit Circumpolar Council (ICC), the Russian Association of Indigenous Peoples of the North (RAIPON) and the Saami Council (SC). Although they do not have voting (but consultation) rights, they represent 500,000 indigenous peoples living in the Arctic regions of Russia, Norway, Finland, Sweden, Denmark (Greenland), Canada, Iceland and the U.S at Arctic Council meetings and are recognized as full participants in all Arctic Council working groups. Although the ability of each community to cope and to adapt to GEC differs depending on the regional location and community setting, all of them need to respond in particular to the changes caused by humans in the Arctic. Through the indigenous peoples' organizations, they address the Arctic Council member-states to consider their positions. The following papers provide an overview on their positions on tourism, resource extraction and shipping in the Arctic region as can be found in the policy- and strategy papers of the six Permanent Participants to the Arctic Council.

### Current & Relevant Information:

The Arctic Athabaskan Council (AAC) is an organization that represents American and Canadian Athabaskan member First Nation governments. The AAC's membership spans across Alaska, Yukon and the Northwest Territories. About 76 communities and roughly 45,000 people live in an area that includes three of the largest river systems in North America, tundra and boreal forests, mountains and non-polar ice fields. Many Athabaskans continue to practice the same traditions and eat the same diet as their ancestors who were semi-nomadic hunters. The AAC is a

Permanent Participant in the Arctic Council and emphasizes biological variability conservation, climate change and helps ensure the implementation of the global Convention on Biological Variability (CBD), UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) and the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants (POPs). The main goal of the AAC is to “foster a greater understanding of the shared heritage of Athabaskan peoples of Arctic North America.” And according to the Treaty of the AAC, Athabaskan peoples are “aware of their respective and mutual interests and responsibilities in preserving and protecting the northern environmental ecosystem.”

While Athabaskan peoples have a shared heritage, their views and perspectives are hardly monolithic or homogenous. That said climate change is a major concern for all Athabaskans who urge for climate adaptation practices and policies. In Alaska, Athabaskan peoples are organized under federal and State statutes, and many other state-legislated and traditional political entities. Energy is central to the economy of the state of Alaska and while Athabaskans are aware of the abundance of natural resources that surround them, their goal is to ensure that natural resources are developed sustainably and responsibly. In Canada, Athabaskan peoples have organized under federal legislation into political bodies, such as bands, self-governing First Nations and regional umbrella organizations.

In regards to shipping, tourism and oil and gas exploitation, the AAC urges for sustainable and responsible development in addition to greater empowerment and awareness raising of indigenous peoples to participate in decision-making processes. As a majority of Athabaskans are relatively young, the consequences of decisions being made will be felt by the younger generations who will inherit the region. The AAC seeks to influence international decision-making and protect the rights and interests of Athabaskan peoples in the US and Canada.

**“The Politics of Adaptation: Subsistence Livelihoods and Vulnerability to Climate Change in the Koyukon Athabaskan Village of Ruby, Alaska,” Nicole J. Wilson, Human Ecology, February 2014 [24] [https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Nicole-Wilson-](https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Nicole-Wilson-5/publication/263256945_The_Politics_of_Adaptation_Subsistence_Livelihoods_and_Vulnerability_to_Climate_Change_in_the_Koyukon_Athabaskan_Village_of_Ruby_Alaska/links/60a3f3b492851ccae9e900b3/The-Politics-of-Adaptation-Subsistence-Livelihoods-and-Vulnerability-to-Climate-Change-in-the-Koyukon-Athabaskan-Village-of-Ruby-Alaska.pdf?origin=publication_detail)**

**[5/publication/263256945\\_The\\_Politics\\_of\\_Adaptation\\_Subsistence\\_Livelihoods\\_and\\_Vulnerability\\_to\\_Climate\\_Change\\_in\\_the\\_Koyukon\\_Athabaskan\\_Village\\_of\\_Ruby\\_Alaska/links/60a3f3b492851ccae9e900b3/The-Politics-of-Adaptation-Subsistence-Livelihoods-and-Vulnerability-to-Climate-Change-in-the-Koyukon-Athabaskan-Village-of-Ruby-Alaska.pdf?origin=publication\\_detail](https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Nicole-Wilson-5/publication/263256945_The_Politics_of_Adaptation_Subsistence_Livelihoods_and_Vulnerability_to_Climate_Change_in_the_Koyukon_Athabaskan_Village_of_Ruby_Alaska/links/60a3f3b492851ccae9e900b3/The-Politics-of-Adaptation-Subsistence-Livelihoods-and-Vulnerability-to-Climate-Change-in-the-Koyukon-Athabaskan-Village-of-Ruby-Alaska.pdf?origin=publication_detail)**

**Abstract:**

The concepts of vulnerability and adaptation have contributed to understanding human responses to climate change. However, analysis of the implications of the broader political context on adaptation has largely been absent. Through a case study of the subsistence livelihoods of Koyukon Athabaskan people of Ruby Village,

this paper examines the implications of adaptation to the social changes precipitated by colonization for the articulation of present responses to climate change. Semi-structured interviews, seasonal rounds, and land-use mapping conducted with twenty community experts indicate that subsistence livelihoods are of continued importance to the people of Ruby in spite of the dramatic social change. While adaptive responses demonstrate resilience, adaptation to one form of change can increase vulnerability to other kinds of perturbations. Research findings illustrate that a historical approach to adaptation can clarify the influence of the present political context on indigenous peoples' responses to climatic impacts.

#### Current & Relevant Information:

### **Introduction**

Arctic and subarctic regions of the world are experiencing some of the most extreme impacts of climate change (Nuttall et al. 2005). Although local impacts vary widely (Nuttall et al. 2005), climate change poses substantial risks to indigenous peoples across the Arctic and Subarctic (ACIA 2005). Many of these risks are associated with subsistence livelihoods, which continue to have sociocultural and ecological significance for indigenous peoples (Kassam 2009; Wheeler and Thornton 2005). While little research on the human dimensions of climate change existed a decade ago, a large number of studies now document its impacts on indigenous peoples of the Arctic and Subarctic (ACIA 2004; Herman-Mercer et al. 2011; Kassam 2009; Krupnik and Jolly 2002; Nichols et al. 2004; Reidlinger and Berkes 2001). These studies primarily examine climatic impacts from the perspective of vulnerability and adaptation to climate change.

### **Conclusion**

Climate change adaptation is an important issue for indigenous peoples and their subsistence livelihoods, which are closely connected to the local ecology. The people of Ruby have faced tremendous changes in the last half century. Interview narratives illustrate many of these changes in subsistence livelihoods. The people of Ruby's responses to historical changes, including sedentization, increased contact with the market economy, and the creation and enforcement of subsistence harvesting regulations, demonstrate their resilience and determination to maintain subsistence livelihoods. Research findings also indicate adaptations to these past social changes have bearing on the people of Ruby's present vulnerability to climate impacts. Furthermore, this analysis raises many ethical considerations regarding the constraints presented by the current political context, shaped by a colonial history, to indigenous peoples' ability to respond to the impacts of climate change in the manner of their choosing. As such, adaptation to climate change is not solely about responding to the directly observable impacts of climate change on subsistence livelihoods, it is also about understanding and addressing the manner in which the

broader political context can make communities more or less vulnerable to the impacts of climate change.

**“A Multiscalar Consideration of the Athabascan Migration,” Briana N. Doering, et al., *American Antiquity*, 2020 [25]**

[https://www.researchgate.net/publication/342711058\\_A\\_Multiscalar\\_Consideration\\_of\\_the\\_Athabascan\\_Migration](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/342711058_A_Multiscalar_Consideration_of_the_Athabascan_Migration)

Abstract:

Genetic and linguistic evidence suggests that, after living in the Subarctic for thousands of years, Northern Athabascans began migrating to the American Southwest around 1,000 years ago. Anthropologists have proposed that this partial out-migration and several associated in situ behavioral changes were the result of a massive volcanic eruption that decimated regional caribou herds. However, regional populations appear to increase around the time of these changes, a demographic shift that may have led to increased territoriality, resource stress, and specialization. Building on existing syntheses of cultural dynamics in the region, analyses of excavated materials, and landscape data from Alaska and Yukon, this research shows that the Athabascan transition represented a gradual shift toward resource specialization in both salmon and caribou with an overall increase in diet breadth, indicating a behavioral transition that is more consistent with gradual demographic change. Further, this behavioral shift was already in motion at the time of the volcanic eruption circa 1150 cal BP and suggests that the ultimate migration from the area was the result of demographic pressures. In sum, this research elaborates on the complex dynamics of resilience and adaptation in hunter-gatherer groups and provides a testable model for explaining past migrations.

Current & Relevant Information:

Athabascan linguistic and human population genetic evidence indicates that a group of Northern Athabascans migrated from the western Subarctic through the Great Plains and into the western continental United States approximately 1,000 years ago (Derry 1975; Dixon 1985; Ives 1990; Malhi et al. 2008; Seymour 2012a, 2012b). This partial migration followed several thousand years of behavioral consistency in central Alaska and Yukon (Dixon 1985; Esdale 2009; Potter 2008, 2016).

Anthropologists have proposed that a catastrophic volcanic eruption around 1150 cal BP ultimately led to several coincident in situ behavioral changes and an associated migration (Derry 1975; Hare et al. 2012; Mullen 2012; Workman 1979). Conversely, an overall increase in the number of sites in the region suggests that the population may have expanded around the time of these changes, a demographic shift that may have led to intensified territoriality and resource stress. The research presented here represents one of the first attempts to evaluate both potential causes of this migration—volcanism versus demographic stress—with data spanning Northern Athabascan territory on both sides of the U.S.-Canada border (Mullen 2012:42).

Migrations are social processes that provide critical insights into human decision making, adaptation, and resilience (Cabana and Clark 2011). While past migration is now conceived of as an inherently collective social process resulting from a suite of push and pull factors (Anthony 1990, 1997), explanations of the Athabascan migration remain largely based in environmental variables (Kristensen, Andrews et al. 2019; Mullen 2012). Yet Athabascans and Arctic peoples more generally are impressively impervious to episodes of prolonged ecological degradation due to their complex social networks and flexible technological systems honed over millennia of survival in these dynamic environments (Berkes and Jolly 2001; Gordon 2012; Ives 1990). Moreover, scholars have recently called into question the extent and severity of ash-induced ecological failure that archaeologists have linked to the Athabascan migration (Gordon 2012; Letts et al. 2012), demanding a reexamination of the migration process and its potential cause(s).

The research presented here builds on existing syntheses of cultural dynamics in the region, excavated materials, and landscape data from Alaska and Canada to evaluate whether this migration and associated behavioral changes were most likely caused by (1) a massive volcanic eruption and presumed ecological collapse and/or (2) increased territoriality associated with a gradual population increase. We evaluated this multiscale dataset, comprising excavated remains from five components spanning circa 2000–500 cal BP and location and site size data from 198 radiocarbon-dated components recovered in both Alaska and Yukon spanning 6000–100 cal BP within a theoretical model drawn from predictions based in human behavioral ecology and ethnographic analogy.

## **Conclusion**

This multiscale approach suggests that the Athabascan transition and subsequent migration were gradual and socially mediated, with important consequences for our understanding of Subarctic cultural systems and hunter-gatherer behavior more generally. The synthesized data presented above suggest that social and demographic factors, possibly augmented by environmental stress, caused the Athabascan migration and associated behavioral changes. Site use, as indicated by location, technology, and subsistence evidence, and broader patterns in landscape use suggest that resource use was broader overall after 2000 cal BP. However, comparisons of artifactual, landscape, and geochemical data between upland and lowland sites show specialization by ecological zone, with large upland camps focused on caribou and large lowland camps targeting fish, contrasting expectations for environmental stress based in human behavioral ecology and ethnographic analysis. Additionally, variations in site and land use also suggest that this change was relatively slow, indicating that prolonged demographic shifts ultimately resulted in adaptation and migration, rather than the rapid ecological fallout associated with volcanic activity in the region.

The results of this analysis contribute to our understanding of late Holocene hunter-gatherer behavior in several dimensions. First, data from excavations showed the prolonged use of microblade technology through the White River Ash event and document some of the earliest copper artifact use and manufacture in this region. Second, these results emphasize the feasibility of residue analysis of hearths from late Holocene occupations in the region, particularly where remains are too fragmentary or poorly preserved for a traditional faunal analysis. Third, the landscape analysis presented here highlights the utility of uniting results from varied field research endeavors collected at different scales, such as cultural resource management, academic, and government projects, in the interest of explicating regional behavioral trends. Finally, this research highlights the potential of evaluating past episodes of hunter-gatherer behavior change and migration in social and environmental terms using predictions drawn from human behavioral ecology. Future research on central Alaskan and Yukon occupations spanning the Holocene can expand on these findings to further refine our understanding of Subarctic culture, migration, and hunter-gatherer behavior at many periods in the past.

**“Health Impact Assessment in Alaska: General Guidance, Project Application, and Sustainable Mitigation,” Alexa Glencer, Princeton University, 19 April 2010**  
[26] [http://www.princeton.edu/~pphr/Alexa\\_Glencer\\_10.pdf](http://www.princeton.edu/~pphr/Alexa_Glencer_10.pdf)

#### Overview:

Collectively referred to as Alaska Natives, the indigenous peoples residing in the state of Alaska belong to a varied group of tribal nations, broadly classified as Aleuts, Indians (Tlingit, Athabascan, Tsimshian, Haida), and Eskimos (Yup'ik and Inupiat) (Jamison, Zegura, and Milan, 1978; Langdon, 1989). Representing approximately 19% of the total Alaskan population, Alaska Natives suffer a much greater share of mortality and morbidity than the national white population (Goldsmith et al., 2004). Primarily attributed to unintentional injury, homicide, and suicide, excess mortality experienced by the Alaska Native population is largely an indirect product of alcohol abuse (Day et al., 2006). In addition to its direct health impacts, alcohol abuse, which has plagued the Alaska Native community for decades, strongly influences patterns of social pathology. Among Alaska Natives, alcohol abuse is associated with elevated levels of suicide, violent death, child abuse, domestic violence, sexual assault, and incarceration (Goldsmith et al., 2004). However, alcohol abuse observed as a population phenomenon is rarely an expression of innate individual character flaws.

Over the past century, rapid sociocultural and economic changes in Alaska have transformed indigenous people's traditional community roles and family structures. Systematic campaigns designed to assimilate Alaska Natives into the growing white population continue to exert residual psychological effects today (Sullivan and Brems, 1997), and the transition from a subsistence- to a cash-based economy in rural areas has led to widespread unemployment and poverty (Wernham, 2007).

Sociocultural alienation compounded by financial despair has generated a pervasive sense of hopelessness that encourages alcohol abuse and other related self-destructive behaviors (Segal, 1998).

Beyond its cultural and psychological impacts, the declining role of subsistence practices has also led to significant changes in Alaska Natives' dietary patterns. Substituting cheap store-bought goods high in saturated fats for subsistence resources rich in unsaturated fats and protein, Alaska Natives have experienced increased rates of a variety of metabolic disorders, including diabetes, hypertension, and obesity (Bersamin et al., 2008; Goldsmith et al., 2004). Other chronic diseases, most prominently cancer, have also become serious public health concerns (Goldsmith et al., 2004).

However, it is neither practically reasonable nor ethically right to prevent Alaska Native communities from being exposed to European-American ideas and economic markets. Instead, Alaska Natives should be provided with a responsive forum in which to voice their concerns and a mechanism designed to protect their interests. Given that large-scale industrial projects constitute the most significant contemporary threats to traditional Alaska Native lifestyles, the development of these projects should involve all stakeholders and should be predicated on a comprehensive consideration of broad social, economic, and environmental health determinants.

Currently, the National Environmental Protection Act (NEPA) mandates that all large-scale industrial project proposals include an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS). Consisting of detailed evaluations of all potential environmental effects associated with a given project, EISs serve as information documents that allow government decisionmakers to weigh economic benefits against adverse environmental outcomes when determining if permits should be issued. Through the explicit provision of public comment periods and cooperating agency status, EISs incorporate substantial public input into the development process (Bhatia and Wernham, 2008). Yet despite the original intent of NEPA, the environmental scope of most current EISs does not extend to considerations of human health (Wernham, 2007; Steinemann, 2000). Separate Health Impact Assessments (HIAs), regularly conducted by European nations, multinational companies, and International Finance Corporation (IFC) loan recipients, are not routinely conducted in the United States (Dannenberg et al., 2008). Although its application is different, HIA, like EIS, is intended to inform decision-makers, enlist public participation, and ultimately generate a set of recommendations. Thus, the integration of HIAs into the operational EIA framework is a logical means of ensuring that health concerns are adequately addressed and appropriate mitigation strategies constructed.

Recently, the State of Alaska has taken the initiative in incorporating the two impact assessment processes within the United States. In 2007, the Alaska Inter-Tribal Council (AITC) coordinated an effort among federal, State, and tribal regulatory and



health agencies to complete three HIAs for proposed oil and gas pipeline projects in the North Slope region. All of these HIAs were included in the final EISs of their respective projects, and the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) has since introduced a measure requiring all North Slope developers to prepare formal HIAs for future projects. Within the past year, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), in collaboration with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (the Corps), the Alaska Department of Natural Resources (ADNR), and the tribal Maniilaq Association, also completed an HIA in association with the Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement (SEIS) prepared for a proposed site extension at the Red Dog Mine in northwestern Alaska. This HIA, which was embedded as a public health section in the SEIS, has established a number of important precedents that will inevitably influence future HIA practice within the State. Namely, it delineates the pathways by which mining projects may impact psychosocial determinants of health, and it describes a variety of mitigation measures that, if implemented, may reduce the adverse public health consequences of mining activity in proximity to rural Alaska Native communities. Furthermore, it represents the first Alaskan HIA performed with the involvement of the State agencies that will be responsible for coordinating HIA evaluations in the future.

Over the past year and a half, an interagency team representing federal and State health and regulatory departments and tribal organizations has worked to develop general HIA guidance applicable to all large-scale resource extraction projects proposed within Alaska. Intended to function as a voluntary framework for implementing best-practice procedures, the guidance borrow from resource extraction HIA protocols established by the IFC but is careful to highlight unique Alaskan public health concerns. Specifically, it devotes significant consideration to the topic of project-related subsistence resource threats and their potential psychosomatic consequences. Reviewing the fundamental processes of screening, scoping, assessment, and mitigation shared between EIS and HIA, it also considers the unique role of monitoring and evaluation (M&E) within the HIA context. While the typical EIS is a predictive tool and M&E is therefore not mandated by any permitting agency, the working group concluded that its inclusion is valuable, for it may serve as an impetus for voluntary industry action. Indeed, the cost efficiencies conferred by mitigation measures implemented during the engineering project phase and subsequent verification strategies that identify which measures are effective and which can be discontinued are likely to appeal to corporate proponents.

Having resolved the relation of M&E to the HIA process, the working group issued a complete draft of the guidance document in the summer of 2009 and, following two rounds of revision, distributed it to each involved agency for the purpose of internal review. During the fall and winter, State agencies conducted a significant overhaul of the document. While the working group draft is largely process-oriented, the State-revised draft is much more methods-oriented. Catering to a corporate audience, it is intended to function as a strict technical tool. In order to avoid the costs associated

with redundancy, it emphasizes coordination with the complementary environmental and social impact assessment processes. Ultimately, it intimates that HIA should not represent a radical departure from the well-established EIS process. The Guidance document should serve as a practical toolkit rather than as a discursive instruction manual.

As a toolkit, the guidance is intended to function as an aid to agencies responsible for conducting HIAs, but it does not claim to offer comprehensive solutions for project specific challenges. Instead, early Alaskan HIA efforts will set important precedents, and subsequent projects will build upon past experience. Already, prior to the release of the guidance document, two projects, each anticipating the permitting stage, have requested that HIAs be performed in conjunction with their respective EIS processes.

The project that has advanced the farthest, the Chuitna Project, proposes to extract 300 million tons of ultra-low sulfur, sub-bituminous coal from a 5000-acre site within the Beluga Coal Field of south-central Alaska over the course of twenty-five years (ADNR, 2010; EPA, 2010). Over the summer, scoping meetings were held within local communities to provide updates, answer questions, and consider concerns. The most profound issues raised were related to the potential bioaccumulation of harmful contaminants in subsistence resources and to the potential decline in abundance of these resources due to altered habitats and obstructed migration routes. Following these meetings, baseline health data was collected from various State agencies. It was proposed that a nutrition survey be conducted among local residents, but State regulatory agencies and the corporate project proponent each resisted. While State health agencies do not believe that a nutrition survey is critical at Chuitna, they worry about the future implications of its exclusion. That is, they would like to avoid creating a precedent that effectively prohibits nutrition surveys from being performed as a component of Alaskan HIAs.

These concerns are particularly salient, because the State health agencies strongly advocate for inclusion of a nutrition survey as an element of the HIA being conducted for the Donlin Creek Project, the other Alaskan resource extraction project involved in HIA negotiations within the past year. Located in southwestern Alaska, the Donlin Creek site is estimated to hold as much as 30 million ounces of gold. Proposed as a joint venture between a large multinational corporation and a Canadian mining company, Donlin Creek, would, if developed, become one of the largest gold mines in the world (Rothe, 2006). It is expected to operate for approximately twenty years and to process 50,000-60,000 tons of ore each day (Donlin Creek LLC, 2008).

Unlike the communities identified as potentially affected by the Chuitna Project, the communities identified as potentially affected by the Donlin Creek Project are largely receptive to industrial development. The particular region in which Donlin Creek is

located, the Yukon-Kuskokwim region, is extremely economically depressed. Indeed, nearly 30% of the population falls below the federal poverty level, and about 70% of the adult population is either unemployed or no longer seeking work (U.S. Census, 2000). Thus, the environmental hazards conferred by the mining project need to be weighed against the economic benefits that it would engender. These economic benefits are both direct and indirect; in addition to the creation of reliable wage-earning jobs, residents recognize in the Donlin Creek Project an opportunity to save capital and to develop infrastructure that could be used to stabilize the cash-based economy in the future. Furthermore, the Donlin Creek management team has established a program designed to prioritize local resident hiring and training. The training component of this program has provided employees with marketable skills and has helped them to cultivate a Western work ethic while still maintaining, and perhaps even enhancing, their traditional Yup'ik values and customs.

In conjunction with extensive community outreach efforts, the local hire program has significantly improved the lives of the people living in the ten villages in closest proximity to the mine site. It has allowed them to succeed in the mixed subsistence/cash-based economy that increasingly characterizes rural Alaska and, in doing so, has helped to resolve endemic social distress. Yet the program also serves the business interests of Donlin Creek LLC, for it ensures provision of a reliable workforce in an inherently volatile industry. Thus, the local hire program suggests a model of corporate social responsibility that could benefit the entire Alaskan mining industry and affected Alaska Native communities.

The creation of formal HIA protocols is not intended to hinder local residents from benefiting from economic opportunities associated with industrial development. Instead, the objective of HIA is to inform the decision-making process and to empower, not handicap, local communities. HIA does not force stakeholders to reject industrial development projects if adverse associated health consequences are identified; it merely gives them that option (as well as several other mitigation strategies) in the context of a well-informed cost-benefit analysis. Moreover, as the Donlin Creek management team proves, corporate project proponents may even choose to voluntarily implement measures that extend their burden of responsibility beyond typical standards of employee and community wellbeing.

The purpose of this thesis is (1) to identify the need for HIA as a standard component of the Alaskan resource extraction industry permitting process, (2) to describe HIA evolution to date within Alaska, (3) to identify persistent issues that impede formulation of a consistent HIA methodology within Alaska, and (4) to suggest strategies by which HIA could be best employed to resolve the tension between broad Alaskan public health concerns and corporate responsibility. The first chapter provides background information pertaining to the current health status of Alaska Natives, the HIA process, and successful examples of HIA application in the Alaskan resource extraction industry over the past three years. The second chapter

describes formulation of general best-practice HIA guidelines intended for voluntary application within the State. These guidelines draw heavily upon those established by the IFC, but their emphasis differs by virtue of the unique data collection, health impact identification, and risk assessment considerations characteristic of rural Alaska. The third chapter examines HIA in relation to two mining projects preparing to enter the permitting stage; it identifies important methodological precedents set and contentious issues raised within the context of these projects' HIA negotiations. The most intransigent debates relate to corporate project proponents' role in mitigating psychosocial health effects mediated by personal choice. The fourth chapter presents a potential remedy to these debates in the form of corporate social responsibility as practiced during exploration activities at the proposed Donlin Creek Project site. It details the creation and implementation of the Calista Shareholder Hire program, which privileges employment of local people in conjunction with training, counseling, and community outreach. Relying on direct testimony, it elucidates the value of the program as perceived by managers, hourly employees, and residents unaffiliated with the project. The chapter concludes by claiming that corporate social responsibility underlies voluntary HIA implementation but contends that the mental health benefits derived from reliable wage-earning job creation need to be measurable in order to be included within the HIA framework. Alternatively, the final chapter suggests that evaluation of broad social determinants of health, which are not easily quantified, may be better allocated to a novel impact assessment tool independent of HIA. In the future, in fact, it is highly likely that the HIA risk assessment process will rely upon a much more quantitative methodology. A matrix proposed within the scholarly literature is reviewed for potential application in the Alaskan context.

**“Successful Aging through the Eyes of Alaska Natives: Exploring Generational Differences Among Alaska Natives,” Jordan P. Lewis, *Journal of Cross-Cultural Gerontology*, 13 July 2010 [27] [https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Jordan-Lewis-11/publication/45168193\\_Successful\\_Aging\\_through\\_the\\_Eyes\\_of\\_Alaska\\_Natives\\_Exploring\\_Generational\\_Differences\\_Among\\_Alaska\\_Natives/links/0a1cc05a1119708b5cfb8018/Successful-Aging-through-the-Eyes-of-Alaska-Natives-Exploring-Generational-Differences-Among-Alaska-Natives.pdf](https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Jordan-Lewis-11/publication/45168193_Successful_Aging_through_the_Eyes_of_Alaska_Natives_Exploring_Generational_Differences_Among_Alaska_Natives/links/0a1cc05a1119708b5cfb8018/Successful-Aging-through-the-Eyes-of-Alaska-Natives-Exploring-Generational-Differences-Among-Alaska-Natives.pdf)**

Abstract:

There is very little research on Alaska Native (AN) elders and how they subjectively define a successful older age. The lack of a culturally-specific definition often results in the use of a generic definition that portrays Alaska Native elders as aging less successfully than their White counterparts. However, there is a very limited understanding of a varied array of successful aging experiences across generations. This research explores the concept of successful aging from an Alaska Native perspective, or what it means to age well in Alaska Native communities. An adapted Explanatory Model (EM) approach was used to gain a sense of the beliefs about

aging from Alaska Natives. Research findings indicate that aging successfully is based on local understandings about personal responsibility and making the conscious decision to live a clean and healthy life, abstaining from drugs and alcohol. The findings also indicate that poor aging is often characterized by a lack of personal responsibility, or not being active, not being able to handle alcohol, and giving up on oneself. Most participants stated that elder status is not determined by reaching a certain age (e.g., 65), but instead is designated when an individual has demonstrated wisdom because of the experiences he or she has gained throughout life. This research seeks to inform future studies on rural aging that prioritizes the perspectives of elders to impact positively on the delivery of health care services and programs in rural Alaska.

#### Current & Relevant Information:

#### **Introduction**

We are all aging as individuals, and we are also aging as a society. Older people over the age of 65 are the fastest growing segment of the population, as they are in most developed nations (AoA 2008). While it is clear that we are living longer, it is not clear that our lives are healthier (Verbrugge 1984). As our communities change and elders live longer, we need to understand how to live out our older years in a good way, at both the individual and societal levels, and to identify factors that can help us to do so (Herzog and House 1991). For Alaska Natives, in particular, this is important because it will enable us to get the most out of our lives, feel good about ourselves as we age, as well as preserve our culture and traditions while honoring our elders who share their knowledge and wisdom. Rowe and Kahn's (1987) biomedical definition of successful aging, which emphasizes physical health, does not fit the holistic approach to aging that is common among Alaska Native elders, and gaining a better understanding about Alaska Natives conceptions and definitions of successful aging will bring new insight for the broader field of aging studies, as well as explore in further detail the local, or cultural, notions of aging. This research answers the question: How do Alaska Natives subjectively define successful aging?

The significance of this research is that it will shed light on what it means to age well in Alaska and what is needed to ensure a successful older age in their own homes and communities. As the population of Alaska continues to grow older, it will be important to understand the needs of our elders to enable them to remain as productive and contributing members in their families and communities.

**“Alaska Native Elders’ Views of Abuse: The Tradition of Harmony, Respect, and Listening,” Kathleen Graves, Louise Shavings, and Elizabeth Rose, *Alaska Journal of Anthropology*, 2009 [28] <https://www.alaskaanthropology.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/11/AJA-v71-optimized.pdf#page=74>**

#### Abstract:

This project queried Alaska Native elders from the five major Alaska Native ethnic groups regarding their ideas about the causes and kinds of elderly abuse and asked them to suggest ways to reduce and control such abuse. They preferred to discuss the topic in terms of respect and disrespect, emphasizing a holistic understanding of current disharmony that flows from the historical trauma experienced by Alaska Native people. Using a grounded theory approach in Part I, major themes are discussed regarding how harmony and balance are maintained through acceptance of one's own value and the value of all creation, including the natural world. The most prevalent kinds of elder abuse that they perceived, presented in Part II, are emotional disrespect of Alaska Native elders by well-meaning western institutions and Alaska Native youth and financial exploitation by family members.

### Current & Relevant Information:

#### **Introduction**

The population of elderly in the U.S. is increasing dramatically. In Alaska, this trend among Alaska Natives is even more dramatic, with more people reaching advanced age compared to the past. Saylor and Doucette (2004) reported a 62% increase over the past twelve years of Alaska Native elderly who are eighty-five years and older, compared to 13.2% for the non-Native population. With an increasing population of elderly comes a growing concern for abuse of the elderly. In 2004, the National Indian Council on Aging reported that there is little known about the scope and nature of abuse and neglect among Native elderly in "Indian country" in the Lower Forty-eight. Buchwald et al. (2000) reported a rate of abuse for urban Native Americans in the Lower Forty-eight that ranged from 2% to 46%, with the probability that socioeconomic factors are responsible for the variation. Segal (2004) suggested that studies are needed to determine how elderly abuse is viewed and defined by Alaska Native peoples.

In response to the above concerns about abuse of Alaska Native elderly, this project initially focused on understanding how elderly Alaska Natives view abuse, focusing solely on Alaska Native elderly residing in urban or hub locations. As will be explained below, we shifted to questions about respect and disrespect shown to Alaska Native elderly, then examined their perceptions of the causes and examples of elder abuse.

The urban location of respondents for this study is justified by the lack of health care in rural Alaska, which has resulted in an increasing influx of elderly to urban and "hub" centers such as Bethel and Barrow (Feldman 1980). In rural Alaska, fewer family members and others are, thus, available to care for the elderly within the community. Branch (2005) recommends expansion and improvement of personal care and community-based services in rural Alaska to lessen this influx of elders away from close family ties. Until that occurs, more and more Alaska Native elderly will be forced to reside where services for them are available.

## Concluding Comments

Traditionally, Alaska Native people had systems in place to restore justice that were mechanisms for handling the absence of respect. These mechanisms need to be recognized, accepted, and reinstated by Native leaders and elders. The system of justice involves traditional teachings, in particular maintenance of balance and harmony and respect for others and the natural world (Gray and Lauderdale 2006). A holistic approach to this issue, as identified by our Alaska Native elder respondents, is required.

### C. Chukchi [Russia]:

**“Reindeer Herders’ Culturescapes in the Koryak Autonomous Okrug,” Alexander D. King, Research Gate, January 2002 [29]**

[https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Alexander-King-11/publication/238746719\\_Reindeer\\_Herders%27\\_Culturescapes\\_in\\_the\\_Koryak\\_Autonomous\\_Okrug/links/00b4952b306533154b000000/Reindeer-Herders-Culturescapes-in-the-Koryak-Autonomous-Okrug.pdf](https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Alexander-King-11/publication/238746719_Reindeer_Herders%27_Culturescapes_in_the_Koryak_Autonomous_Okrug/links/00b4952b306533154b000000/Reindeer-Herders-Culturescapes-in-the-Koryak-Autonomous-Okrug.pdf)

### Overview:

Chukchi are one of a few ethnicities who are the butt of jokes in Russia. I was told many Chukchi jokes in Kamchatka, mostly by Chukchi and Koryaks themselves. Rarely were Koryaks identified in these jokes, but I was told one ‘Koryak joke’ during tea where my wife and I were the only whites present:

A Koryak is sitting out in the tundra guarding the herd. He hears a voice calling, ‘People! People!’ [liudi]. He runs toward the sound over the hill and sees a Russian man at the bottom in the snow. The Russian calls out ‘People! People! Help me!’ The Koryak says, ‘Oh? In the tundra we are people. There in Tilichiki we are just Koryaks’.

Everyone laughed, and a Koryak woman sitting next to me commented, ‘Yes, in the tundra we are always people’. The tundra is the locus of native culture in Kamchatka. Everyone in Kamchatka regardless of ethnicity or length of residence agrees on this value, but the other meanings associated with tundra spaces and native peoples vary from the differing perspectives of Russians, native elites, and native non-elites.

In Palana Russians and even some native elites (characterized by higher education and white-collar employment, usually in a larger town) associate spaces in the tundra with ‘wilderness’ and oppose them to ‘civilization’. This nature-culture divide allocates Koryaks to the wilds of the tundra, which is outside the European understanding of ‘culture’ and ‘civilization’. In civilized places, as the joke points out, they are not quite ‘people’, but something less, mere ‘Koryaks’. Native people who participate in a way of life connected to the tundra can make a ‘wilderness’ versus ‘civilization’ distinction if led in that direction by the conversation. They are familiar



with European values, but they do not express these values when talking about themselves on their own terms, 'on their own turf'. As one can infer from the joke, native people understand the tundra as their 'own' space and oppose the tundra to the town as a 'Russian' or 'other' space. This landscape of self and other can be used to mark boundaries or define groups; it references different, often contradictory, sets of values, different cultural patterns.

Before I present the local symbols associated with the landscape and the most relevant social relations, an etic orientation for the reader is warranted. Kamchatka is a peninsula in the far northeastern corner of the Russian Federation. It separates the Sea of Okhotsk from the Bering Sea and the Pacific Ocean. The Koryak Autonomous Okrug is an administrative territory occupying the northern two-thirds of Kamchatka and some of the adjoining mainland. The okrug is bordered on the north by the Chukchi Autonomous Okrug, by Magadan Province to the northwest and by Kamchatka Province to the south. The indigenous people of this area are enumerated into several cultural groups in the standard anthropological works: Itelmen, Koryak, Chukchi, and Even. Sometimes Koryaks are divided into Chauvchu (reindeer herders) and Nymylan (town-dwelling hunter-fishers), but this economic (or praxis) distinction can be extended to all the indigenous ethnic groups in the area. While people in Kamchatka sometimes distinguish ethnic groups from one another in this way, they most often distinguish mestnye (locals, natives) from priezzhiye (incomers), especially when they are discussing cultural differences (whether practices, beliefs, social relations, etc.). The group priezzhiye is not monolithic; priezzhiye include Russians, Ukrainians, Buriats, and others, but mestnye pointed out to me that these distinctions meant nothing when describing how these elites related to and talked about native people. Although my discussion here focuses on reindeer herders and their relations to the landscape, both in White imagination and in native people's own terms, my generalizations could be extended to hunter-fisher people, as well.

This paper contrasts two ways of speaking about the landscape and native culture in the Koryak Autonomous Okrug (KAO), which I identify as 'European' and as 'native Kamchatkan'. Contrasting ways of speaking about the landscape mark someone as native (mestny, korennoi) or non-native (priezzhi) in Kamchatka. My term, 'culturescape' is an attempt to connect culture to the landscape in a way evocative of Appadurai's (1996) ideas of ethnoscaping, neighborhoods, and locality, which are best understood as activities or processes, not entities. My usage of 'culturescapes' is also part of an attempt to return to a more old-fashioned anthropology, one that values such information as toponymy and narratives about trees and hills. As Basso (1996, 109 ff.) and Descola (1996) have argued, thinking of the landscape as existing 'out there' independent of humans reflects a European worldview. The landscape is best understood as simultaneously a background for a cultural worldview and constituted by that same worldview (Feld and Basso 1996, 14 ff.). This follows native Kamchatkans' ways of talking about place; it is a physical

landscape, which is enacted and expressed in terms of social relations and activities. My usage of the term 'culturescape' is an inverse of Appadurai's 'ethnoscape'. Instead of a de-territorialized network of people, identities, and ideas, I emphasize the rootedness of daily life and people's understandings in a particular place.

Current & Relevant Information:

As is typical across Siberia, the indigenous population is mostly rural, while immigrant Russophones dominate the more urban settlements of Palana, Ossora, and Tilichiki/Korf. What Russians see as civilization (Moscow, Petropavlovsk-Kamchatski); natives see as European spaces (cities, towns). Russians in Kamchatka understand this point of view as one that puts native people not in civilization but in wilderness, and this makes native people 'wild', whether as noble savages or just as primitives. Koryak and Chukchi reindeer herders in the Koryak Autonomous Okrug talk about the landscape as different kinds of places. Naturally they make distinctions between domestic and not; they have small and large rituals marking places as domestic. These places weren't previously unmarked, however, but different, associated with other persons (human or non-human). Other kinds of persons inhabit other kinds of spaces – herd deer, bear, fish, and various spiritual personae.

**“Interethnic Tolerance of Chukchi,” Aida Egorova, Tuiaara Sidorova, and Valentina Davydova, International Journal of Social Science and Humanity, May 2013 [30]**

<http://www.ijssh.org/index.php?m=content&c=index&a=show&catid=39&id=536>

Abstract:

The article presents the results of scientific expedition studying the level of interethnic tolerance of representatives of Chukchi ethnos who live in the Republic of Sakha (Yakutia) (2012). In the process of empirical study, it was found that representatives of Chukchi ethnos have a prevailing average level of ethnic tolerance.

Current & Relevant Information:

**Introduction**

The study of interrelation between the unique culture of peoples of the North and psychology is aimed at connecting history with routine way of life, ethnical specificity with its modern interpretation. The study of cultural and specific mechanisms of ethno psychological display of personality of native people will allow, with taking into consideration size and variations of the culture standard, to render effective and categorical psychological assistance that makes it possible to establish really harmonic relations with own personality and the world around.

Revival and maintenance of ethnic identity and ethnic self-consciousness of indigenous peoples is an important task of the modern society. In connection therewith, studies of ethnic identity and interethnic tolerance specificity of peoples, living in Northeastern Russia, are of special topicality.

The Sakha Republic (Yakutia) is a multinational region, where historically not only native ethnic groups, but also representatives of different peoples of Russia and CIS countries have lived.

On the territory of the Sakha Republic (Yakutia) 32,860 representatives of low-numbered peoples of the North, including the Evenks—18,232, the Evens—11,657, the Yukaghirs—1,097, the Chukchis—602, the Dolgans—1,272 live. Population of the low-numbered peoples of the North is 3.2% within all population of the Sakha Republic.

The native low-numbered peoples of the North, settled dispersed on a huge area of Arctic space, were formed as an ethnos exactly on this territory. During centuries they have led a specific nomadic and semi-nomadic life, which turned into their way of life. These peoples possess original ancient cultures; their life is inseparably associated with native lands and traditions. Ensuring their legal protection, improvement of social and economic status is considered as matter of priority of a state policy of the Sakha Republic (Yakutia).

The Chukchi – the most ancient inhabitants of continental regions of the far north-east of Siberia, mediums of an inland culture of wild deer hunters and fishermen. Neolithic findings on the Ekytikyveem and Enmyveem Rivers and Lake Elgytg date back the second millennium B.C. By the first millennium C.E., having domestic deer and partially leading sedentary life on a sea shore, the Chukchi came into a contact with the Eskimo. A transfer to the sedentism was especially active in the XIV-XVI centuries after penetration of the Yukaghirs in the Kolyma and Anadyr valleys, who occupied places of wild deer open seasons. The Eskimo population of coasts of the Pacific and Arctic Oceans was partially forced out in other coastal regions by the continental hunters-Chukchi, and partially assimilated. In the XIV-XV centuries as a result of the penetration of the Yukaghirs in the Anadyr valley a territorial separation of the Chukchi from the Koryaks happened, connected with the last by origin.

In the epoch of global profound changes of societies, not only social and economic aspects of development, but also fates of many native peoples, who's historically formed way of life being based on a traditional culture, undergoes a significant influence of an industrial civilization, are intertwined. A problem of adaptation of the native peoples to changes of natural environment, social and technical transformations undoubtedly is of a research interest. On the other hand, the native peoples have new ways to solve problems, connected with an opportunity to use innovative technologies in all spheres of life that will promote preservation and development of a native language, the origin culture, spiritual heritage of the people.

Processes of a cross-cultural assimilation and an interethnic cooperation long ago became relies of the modern society, in the period of global changes, these processes require special attention. Decreases of an interethnic tension, increase of a cross-cultural tolerance, development of integration processes is urgent today. A research of contents of ethnic stereotypes, peculiarities of the interethnic cooperation and socio-cultural adaptation of the low-numbered peoples is of the great interest.

## Conclusion

Thus, as a whole on Chukchi selection, the level of ethnic tolerance is average. As for hetero stereotypes of representatives of Chukchi ethnos, among positive features prevail: endurance, hospitality, good nature, sense of duty, love of children, love to native places, modesty, diligence, ability to survive in severe conditions, and among the negative ones are aggression, talkativeness, suggestibility, arrogance, trustfulness, inertness, non-obligatoriness, absence of purposefulness, tendency to abuse of alcoholic drinks, frankness, indifference, deservedness, weakness for temptations, weak character, shyness, obstinacy, loss of national dignity, feeling of national lameness.

**“Chukchi People,” Britannica, 18 September 2024 [31]**

<https://www.britannica.com/topic/Chukchi>

### Overview:

**Chukchi**, people inhabiting the northeasternmost part of Siberia, the [Chukotskiy](#) (Chukotka) [autonomous okrug](#) (district) in [Russia](#). They numbered 14,000 in the late 20th century and are divided into two chief subgroups, reindeer Chukchi and maritime Chukchi. The [reindeer](#) Chukchi inhabit the interior of the easternmost portion of the *okrug*, the Chukotskiy (Chukchi) Peninsula, and its Siberian hinterland; the maritime Chukchi inhabit the Arctic and Bering coasts. Both speak a Luorawetlan language of the [Paleosiberian](#) language group and are linguistically and culturally related to the [Koryak](#) and [Itelmen](#) (Kamchadal).

### Current & Relevant Information:

The reindeer Chukchi formerly lived mainly off of domesticated herds of reindeer. These herds supplied them with means of transport, milk and meat for food, and pelts for clothing and shelter. The [maritime](#) Chukchi lived by [hunting](#) Arctic sea mammals, chiefly walrus, seals, and whales, and by fishing.

Their traditional dwellings varied according to their subsistence pattern. Maritime Chukchi lived in fixed villages; their houses were semisubterranean. Reindeer Chukchi were nomadic and lived in tents, changing residence according to seasonal change in pasture. Transportation depended on sledges pulled by reindeer or dogs harnessed in pairs. The maritime Chukchi traveled in boats with wooden frames and skin covers. The basic socioeconomic unit of the maritime Chukchi was the boat

team of several related families; it sometimes included neighbours. The village was a territorial association of related and unrelated families. Among the reindeer Chukchi, the encampment of families who herded together was the basic economic unit.

According to Chukchi religion, invisible spirits populate the universe. Sacrifices were an important aspect of the major festivals. Shamanist ceremonies were conducted for divination and healing.

After the Russian Revolution the Chukchi were settled on [collective](#) farms. Technical improvements and new economic activities have been introduced among them.

**“The Chukchis,” redbook** [\[32\]](#) <https://redbook.verbix.com/chukchis.shtml>

#### Overview:

The self-designation of the coastal Chukchis is ankalyn, "coastal man", and of the tundra Chukchis, chavchu, "reindeer man". The name lygoravetlyan -- "true, genuine man" covers both tribes. In the 1920s, the name was adapted as the official name Luorawetlan. In practical linguistic usage, the name chukchi, a Russian adaption of the name chavchu, has been widespread since the 17th century. It has been supported by Russian geographical names (Chukotka, Chukotsky poluoostrov, Chukotskoye more) and since World War II the name Chukchi has been predominant in official use. Nowadays, it is in overwhelming use by the people themselves.

The earliest written records of the Chukchis date back to 1755 when they were mentioned in a travel report by the Russian explorer S. Krashenninikov.

#### Current & Relevant Information:

**Habitat.** The Chukchis live in the extreme northeastern part of Siberia, in the area between the Chukchi and Bering Seas, which extends from the vicinity of the mouth of the River Indigirka to the Bering Straits in the east, and from the Arctic Ocean to the Kamchatkan Peninsula in the south. Administratively, they belong to the Chukchi Autonomous District of the Russian Federation (Magadan Region) and to the Lower Kolyma District of the Yakutian ASSR. The vast area (660,600 sq km) the Chukchis inhabit is a region with a harsh arctic climate. The Chukchi Peninsula belongs to the permafrost zone of the tundra, and the Chukchi Upland is predominantly mountain tundra, partly frozen desert.

**Population.** The existing data is from the all-Union censuses:

		native speakers
1926	12,331 (incomplete data)	
1959	11,727	93.9 %
1970	13,597	82.6 %
1979	13,597	78.2 %
1989	15,183	70.3 %

V. Bogoraz has claimed that the data in the census of 1926 is not complete and he asserts that in 1936 there were approximately 15,500 Chukchis (12,000 tundra-Chukchis and 3,500 coastal Chukchis). The population of the Chukchis, especially the tundra-Chukchis, has shown a slow but constant increase. At the same time, however, the percentage of Chukchis inhabiting their native area has diminished. In 1936 they were in the majority in the Chukchi National District of the Far East region, in 1970 they formed only 11 % of the Chukchi Autonomous District of the Magadan Region.

**Anthropologically** the Chukchis belong to the North Asian race. They are short people with a swarthy complexion and a stocky build. Their faces are very broad and flat, the cheekbones are prominent and the narrow eyes have a pronounced Mongolian fold. The eyes and hair are dark, and the hair is straight and stiff. They have no growth of beard.

**The Chukchi language**, together with the Koryak and Itelmen languages, belongs to the Chukchi-Kamchatkan group of Paleo-Asiatic languages. The closest related language is Koryak. Despite the huge area of distribution, dialectical differences are slight. The Chukchi language is divided into several dialects: the coastal or eastern dialect, the tundra or western dialect, the Enmylin dialect, (characterized by the influence of the Kerek language), and the Nunligran and Khatyrka (with Koryak influences). The categorization of dialects is still ongoing.

In structure, Chukchi is an incorporate language. The Paleo-Asiatic languages are believed to be primordially related to the languages of the American Indians. When a land connection existed, before the rift that is the present-day Bering Straits, the ancestors of the Indians migrated to what is now America. This hypothesis has many supporters. The kinship of Chukchi with the Eskimo-Aleut languages has not yet been confirmed.

A curious peculiarity of the Chukchi language is its different pronunciation by men and women. The women's language lacks the r-sound, they pronounce ts instead. The men's pronunciation of the r is regarded as unsuitable for women.

**Language.** The Chukchis have had linguistic contacts with all their neighboring peoples. Areas traditionally central to the Chukchi lifestyle are rich in native vocabulary (for example, 'reindeer' as a name exists in many forms depending on the age, color, gender or nature of the animal). The layers of loan words form a clear pattern: the older loans come from the Eskimo language (predominantly in the fields of fishing and seafaring). There are fewer loans from the Koryak, Yakut and Yukaghir languages. Russian loan-words appear from the 1930s on. A newly introduced written language urgently needed its own words for evolving socio-political, cultural and technical notions. A part of them were borrowed from Russian, the rest formed from native linguistic material. Later, Russian gained unlimited supremacy. Russian spread, and its prestige increased due to schooling, mass media, business and other everyday exposure. In the 1960s, there was a boom in mixed marriages which eliminated the Chukchi language from domestic use far more efficiently than any official policy.

**History.** The Chukchis are one of the aboriginal peoples of Siberia. Chukotka is believed to have been inhabited for about the last 7,000 years, although the ancestors of the Chukchis migrated there from the south somewhat later. They assimilated the local tribes and subsequently expanded their habitation (mainly at the expense of Eskimos, but also of Yukaghirs). Life for the Chukchis means privation and cold and a constant struggle for existence, but also freedom and proud self-sufficiency. In 1642, a Cossack named Ivan Yerastov reached the River Alazeya, and in 1649 the fortified settlement of Anadyr was founded. However, conquering the land of the Chukchis was a slow and laborious task for the Russians. The Chukchis defended themselves bravely. Prisoners of war killed each other, preferring death to slavery. By the 1730s the land was conquered, but not the people. Construction expenses for the Anadyr fortress were, for the period 1710 to 1764, 1,381,000 roubles. In 1778 the Russians thought it preferable to conclude a peace treaty with the Chukchis. The treaty held and the forcible gathering of tribute was abandoned. If the Russians had not yielded, probably all the wayward Chukchis would have crossed over to the American side of the Straits. Abandoning the fortified settlement of Anadyr helped appease the wrath of the Chukchis and gradually they began trading with the Russians. To inform foreign ships that the Chukchi Peninsula belonged to the Russian Empire, huge imperial coats-of-arms were sent to Chukotka and the Chukchis were ordered to fasten them onto trees along the coast. Alas, the lords in St. Petersburg had no idea that Chukotka was a region with little vegetation and no trees.

Later the Russians tried to expand their influence under the cover of trade. In 1788, for example, they began organizing fairs in Anyui, to carry on the old traditions of



barter trade. The Chukchis were lured, with the help of bribes, gifts and vodka, to become reconciled to imperial rule and their paying of tributes. Sources from 1822 indicate that the Chukchis were left to pay tributes at their own discretion. However, by the 19th century the Chukchis were known to be very fond of vodka. Primitive races have no biological resistance to alcohol, and fondness can rapidly lead to addiction.

After the sale of Alaska (1867) Russia hastened to develop its trade relations in northeast Asia so that Russian businessmen could keep foreign (mainly American) merchants at bay. In 1889 a special trading center, Mariinski Post, was founded in Anadyr. Nevertheless, as late as post-World War I, English, Norwegian and U.S. merchant ships and fishing boats were still seen off the Chukotka coast until the Soviet regime began to drive them away.

Chukchis are traditionally nomadic reindeer herders. They have always been more active than their neighbors. The coastal Chukchis settled on primeval Eskimo land; the Eskimos, Itelmens, Evens, Kereks etc, have long been accustomed to communicating with Chukchis in the Chukchi language -- many of them have even become Chukchis themselves. At the same time, Chukotka has served as some kind of a contact zone. The reindeer breeders traded their reindeer skins, meat and furs for fish, train-oil and walrus skins from the coastal people. There has always been a lively trade between all the peoples.

The Soviet regime made itself felt initially by introducing profound changes. In 1930 the Chukchi National Region was established. For the Chukchis, who were organized in a clan system, co-operatives were founded. A settled mode of life was promoted and, by the 1950s, the idea of kolkhozes reached Chukotka. The Chukchis put up armed resistance to collectivization, but a terror of the KGB and the army soon overcame their contumacy. Soviet ideology meant civilizing the Chukchis (amongst other things, a written language, education, a medical service, and new technology) but all this took place in rapid bounds and the price for it was high. The proud and willful Chukchis were reduced to slaves of the planned economy, and the management of their life and work was taken over by a distant administration. The Chukchis are one of the most conspicuous examples to illustrate the effects of Soviet colonial policy. The rich mineral resources of Chukotka (coal, gold, tungsten, lead and mercury) were seized upon by all-Union enterprises. For instance, 40 % of the Soviet Union's production of gold, or 40 billion roubles a year, was provided by Chukotka. The Russian Federation as a whole gained 300 million roubles, Chukotka got nothing. The industrial enterprises introduced to Chukotka came with an imported workforce of aliens, provisional labor eager for fast money. A badly polluted environment is the natives legacy from industrialization. The rivers once rich in fish were laid to waste and the sensitive crust of the tundra was spoiled encroaching on the pastures of the reindeer. Even the climate has changed. Relatively mild frost (-20 °C to -25 °C) is combined with piercing winds.

The rapid alteration of living conditions has generated some very serious problems. It is difficult for the nomads to adapt to a settled life. While the traditional occupations have diminished, new, suitable jobs are not easy to find. Chukchis have mostly been restricted to cheaper, dirtier and unqualified jobs, since ordered work in an urbanized environment is unsuitable. Since the 1950s, they have become accustomed to store-bought food (beef, preserves, refined farinaceous food etc), that have spoilt the natural immunity system of the Chukchis. In the old times, they used to receive their necessary vitamins and minerals from reindeer, seal and walrus meat, fresh fish and tundra plants. These vitamins and minerals are missing from the mass-manufactured, store-bought food. As late as the 1920s the Chukchis were reported to be a strong and healthy people. Nowadays, almost the whole nation is ailing. An absolute disaster for the Chukchis were the nuclear tests of the 50s and 60s which were carried out in the airspace of the far north. The radioactive residue and heavy metals have passed through the food chain (moss -- reindeer -- man) and are damaging the human organism. There is very much grippe, tuberculosis, cirrhosis of the liver, and cancer of the stomach and lungs among the Chukchis. Women are accepted into hospital one month before childbirth. The percentage of normal childbirth is just 40, and 80 to 100 newborn Chukchi children die out of every thousand (the average in Russia is 15). The tragic picture is compounded by excessive alcoholism and a considerably higher suicide rate than the all-Union average.

The preservation of Chukchi folk culture and the nation's capability for reproduction is at peril. Children are brought up at Russian boarding-schools, maintained by the state, and allowed to visit their parents only during school holidays. Parents have been deprived of a chance to take care of their children, and to pass on to them their experience and customs. The environment is favorable only to the propagation of the Russian language -- it reigns in stores, in hospitals and offices. Since the 1960s, and its boom of mixed marriages, Russian has even invaded domestic life. One of the reasons why Chukchi women so frequently married Russian men may have been that they thought their chances of bearing healthy children greater with a Russian partner.

Recently, the Chukchis have begun to revive as a nation. National issues and problems that have so far been prohibited from discussion have become topical. The Chukchis once sunk in total apathy in their polluted Russian language environment, are beginning to hope again.

**Writing.** From time immemorial, the Chukchis have used pictographs, and their most ancient documents are inscribed walrus tusks. The first printed texts (however badly spelt) in the Chukchi language appeared in Yakutsk in 1881 and 1894, on the occasion of the coronation celebrations of the Tsar. In the 1920s a shepherd, Tenevil, made an attempt to create a written language, using symbolic letters derived from pictographs. The Chukchi written language was created in 1932 at the

Leningrad Institute of Northern Peoples, using the Latin alphabet. A primer Celgy-Kalekal (Red Book), compiled by V. Bogoraz, also some school textbooks and rough translations from Russian were published. In 1937 the Russian alphabet became obligatory. In 1940, as the first literary work in Chukchi, Tynetegin published a collection of fairy-tales. In 1950, the Chukchi writer Yuri Rytheu began his creative output.

The Chukchi printed word has mainly been limited to primary school textbooks and some sketches and fiction. In the 1960s the trend toward a so-called unitary Soviet people began and publications in the Chukchi language were stopped. In the 1980s a new primer and a reader Tirkykej (Little Sun) were compiled. A newspaper Sovetken Chukotka (Soviet Chukotka) began publishing in Anadyr.

**Research of the Chukchi language.** The first Chukchi words can be found in a Kamchatkan travel report from 1755 by S. Krasheninnikov. As an amateur, O. Nordquist, an expedition companion of A. E. Nordenskiöld (1878--79), wrote some notes on Chukchi grammar, and the missionary M. Petelin made an attempt to compose a Russian-Chukchi dictionary. Academic research of the language was started by V. Bogoraz, the activist of the Narodnaya Volya, later a professor at Leningrad University. His name is connected with a profound ethnographic investigation of the Chukchi people over a prolonged period. He published materials about Chukchi linguistics and folklore (1899, 1900), a Chukchi mythology (part one in 1910, part two in 1922), and compiled Russian-Chukchi (1927) and Chukchi-Russian (1937) dictionaries. In the years 1931 to 1934, V. Bogoraz took an active part in the creation of the Chukchi written language, compiling a primer and other textbooks and adapting various texts into the Chukchi language. In 1934 he published the first extensive survey of Chukchi (Luorawetlan) grammar. Since World War II, an academic grammar book has been written by P. Skorik (part one in 1961 and part two in 1977) and a Chukchi history and ethnology have been detailed by I. Vdovin 1965.

#### Social Issues:

**“Chukchi: Social Problems,” Encyclopedia.com, 2 December 2024 [33]**  
<https://www.encyclopedia.com/history/modern-europe/russian-soviet-and-cis-history/chukchi#:~:text=SOCIAL%20PROBLEMS,diseases%20among%20the%20modern%20Chukchi>.

#### Overview:

The Chukchi are an Arctic people who chiefly inhabit the Chukchi peninsula, or Chukotka, in the extreme northeastern section of Siberia that faces [North America](#) across the [Bering Strait](#). Archeological and linguistic evidence suggests that their original homeland probably lay further to the south along the shores of the [Sea of Okhotsk](#), from which they migrated to their present area about six thousand years ago. The Chukchi who live in the interior of the Chukchi peninsula have traditionally

been herdsman and hunters of reindeer; those who live along the coasts of the [Arctic Ocean](#), the Chukchi Sea, and the [Bering Sea](#) have customarily hunted sea mammals such as seals, whales, walruses, and sea lions. The Chukchi call themselves the *Lygoravetlat* (singular: *Lygoravetlan*), which means "genuine people." The word "Chukchi"—sometimes spelled "Chukchee"—is itself a plural form of the Russian word *Chukcha* (feminine: *Chukchanka*), which is their word for an individual *Lygoravetlan*. The reindeer Chukchi also call themselves *Chavchu* ("rich in reindeer"), whereas the coastal Chukchi call themselves the *Ankalit* ("sea people"). Interestingly, the reindeer breeders among the neighboring Koriak people have also been known to call themselves "Chavchu."

The Chukchi were one of the last Siberian peoples to fall under Russian rule. Russian Cossacks and adventurers in Siberia first learned of the Chukchi from the neighboring Yukagirs and Koriaks in the 1640s, but no serious attempt was made to conquer them at first. Russia was at that time occupied with subduing Siberia's other indigenous peoples, and in any event the harsh tundra lands inhabited by the Chukchi were relatively poor in sable and other valuable fur-bearing animals sought by the Russians. But Chukchi raids on nearby Cossack settlers, combined with a need to find new sources of furs after stocks in other parts of Siberia had been depleted, led Russia to launch a series of vigorous military campaigns against the Chukchi in 1729. The Chukchi put up a ferocious resistance and, when surrounded, they frequently committed mass suicide rather than surrender. By the 1760s, the Russian government decided that the cost of vanquishing the Chukchi was too high in terms of money and troops and ended the war on the condition that the Chukchi cease attacking Russian settlers and pay the *yasak* (the yearly tax that native Siberians paid in furs). Since Chukchi territory was quite isolated from the rest of the Russian empire and its cold, harsh climate was unattractive to outsiders, the Chukchi suffered much less than most other Siberian peoples from Russian colonization and exploitation and government interference into their way of life under the Czar-ist regime and the early Soviet period. Most Chukchi contact with the Russians came through trade, in which the Chukchi received knives, kettles, and other cooking utensils, vodka, tea, tobacco, and sugar in exchange for their fox furs and ivory. American whaling ships also participated in this kind of barter with the Chukchi in the late 1800s. This relatively independent existence came to an end in the 1930s, however, when herdsman and sea-mammal hunters were forced into state-supervised economic collectives. Chukotka became a region of mines and gulags (concentration camps) as Stalin's campaign to rapidly develop Soviet industry increased demands for the tin and gold that lay under Chukchi soil. Furthermore, the arrest of millions of Soviet citizens during that decade's waves of mass political repression created a need for isolated areas in which to build prison camps. Later in the Soviet era, the Chukchi were culturally afflicted as the frequent subjects of ethnic stereotype jokes told by Russians.

Current & Relevant Information:

## SOCIAL PROBLEMS

Pollution caused by Soviet-era mining and industry, poverty, poor diet and medical care, and widespread alcoholism have led to high rates of tuberculosis and other diseases among the modern Chukchi. Chukchi alcoholics, like those in other parts of the Soviet Union, sometimes die from drinking industrial fluids that contain alcohol. Moreover, pollution, weapons testing, strip mining, and overuse of industrial and mining equipment and vehicles have greatly damaged Chukotka's environment and endangered its ability to support traditional Chukchi economic activities.

Although many of the early Bolsheviks advocated equal rights for the USSR's peoples and supported the preservation and development of their cultures and languages, Stalin and his successors adopted a policy of Russification intended to destroy non-Russian cultures through persecution and neglect (while, of course, denying this officially). For the Chukchi, like the other native Siberian peoples, the 1960s and 1970s were the most destructive period in this regard. The government abolished many native settlements, dispersed their former inhabitants, and made Russian the language of instruction in Chukchi schools. When the Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev relaxed the USSR's policies towards censorship and the nationalities during the 1980s, writers, teachers, and other concerned Chukchi began to criticize these policies and to participate in native-rights organizations such as the Association of the Small Peoples of the North. They have also begun to expand Chukchi-language teaching and publishing.

### **“Livelihoods on Thawing Ground,” Peter P. Schweitzer, et al., Anthropology News, February 2010 [34]**

[https://d1wqtxts1xzle7.cloudfront.net/32311538/Schweitzer et al.Livelihoods on Thawing Ground-libre.pdf?1391565978=&response-content-disposition=inline%3B+filename%3DPeter P Schweitzer Lilian Na ia Alessa A.pdf&Expires=1733584906&Signature=Cm~r-CmWZviVHcCM4S7BBmVCDGvuDUr8Yqo34yDuhEvNUDiYvt1bnNJVe1I7~sDYTGsxEuqlj4pMJpiNWzrwaDj~yBeNsyOd7LjE~1F-zFVBOMfk7V5d7Y-8RJUQlypvoTYYY~oRAioZs-j29RIFQja2ADL8Yf6DLRB271c93hkTnhs35X03gP1mfAqgxH74yehw3PHfkeMP9C4IqBLDjtadnDQrsWuCLHUgzav2AqVxsiB3bPicZnEBZ3zi0UikbGNI0BHvbN2O21oLc7YLzWokWHegYoKvkqqLuKYeGXtZ~9rh0h~LXmZ3N3LDZLQr7EnwNB~dLQXN-wZrq5TUA\\_&Key-Pair-Id=APKAJLOHF5GGSLRBV4ZA](https://d1wqtxts1xzle7.cloudfront.net/32311538/Schweitzer_et_al.Livelihoods_on_Thawing_Ground-libre.pdf?1391565978=&response-content-disposition=inline%3B+filename%3DPeter_P_Schweitzer_Lilian_Na_ia_Alessa_A.pdf&Expires=1733584906&Signature=Cm~r-CmWZviVHcCM4S7BBmVCDGvuDUr8Yqo34yDuhEvNUDiYvt1bnNJVe1I7~sDYTGsxEuqlj4pMJpiNWzrwaDj~yBeNsyOd7LjE~1F-zFVBOMfk7V5d7Y-8RJUQlypvoTYYY~oRAioZs-j29RIFQja2ADL8Yf6DLRB271c93hkTnhs35X03gP1mfAqgxH74yehw3PHfkeMP9C4IqBLDjtadnDQrsWuCLHUgzav2AqVxsiB3bPicZnEBZ3zi0UikbGNI0BHvbN2O21oLc7YLzWokWHegYoKvkqqLuKYeGXtZ~9rh0h~LXmZ3N3LDZLQr7EnwNB~dLQXN-wZrq5TUA_&Key-Pair-Id=APKAJLOHF5GGSLRBV4ZA)

#### Overview:

One of the impacts of climate change on freshwater systems in the Arctic is the thinning of the ice-rich permafrost layer resulting from warming soil temperatures. The melting sections of permafrost allow greater drainage of surface water to subsurface groundwater, depleting the tundra lakes and ponds that often constitute the primary sources of water for remote, resource-dependent arctic communities. In

the course of a five-year study funded by the National Science Foundation, our group of researchers from a variety of backgrounds has been collaborating in trying to understand how social and climatic factors interact to impact the vulnerability of arctic communities with respect to their water resources.

Our research is based in the Bering Strait area of Russia and Alaska, involving nine communities that are home, predominantly, to the Siberian Yupik, Chukchi and Inupiaq people. Existing water infrastructures are extremely variable on both sides of the Bering Strait, ranging from individual procurement of water or ice and snow to municipal vehicle delivery and indoor plumbing, the last being a recent innovation in some communities. With communities struggling to meet increasing demand for water in the context of changing hydrological conditions, one of the questions we tried to address is how different levels of infrastructure affect perceptions of change and overall relationships with the resource.

#### Current & Relevant Information:

Prior to Russian or Slavic culinary influences—diffusing in part through boarding schools and other intentionally acculturating institutions—the indigenous cuisines of the Yupik and Chukchi people relied heavily on such methods as dehydration, fermentation and freezing to preserve and prepare food. Reindeer blood and fat of sea mammals were the preferred cooking media in the preparation of most hot meat dishes. It is with the growing popularity of tea, which since its introduction in the late 1800s was for a long time considered appropriate only for elders, that water has become an essential part of almost every meal. Otherwise, the principal dish would be followed with a few sips of meat broth, which constituted the main beverage. “Raw” water (today’s term for any water—filtered or taken directly from the natural source—that has not been boiled) was drunk in a sipping manner to quench thirst. Although the quantity of water required for daily tasks was relatively small, good freshwater sources were known and respected. Coastal people took care to preserve access to little springs, floating out of a side of a mountain, while reindeer herders were extremely attentive to vegetation that affected the quality of water or ice in ponds along their migrating routes. Relationships with the resource were based on the recognition of its essential value, integrated with a way of life that was adapted for its minimal use.

**“Russian Laws on Indigenous Issues. Guarantees, Communities, Territories of Traditional Land Use: Translated and Commented,” Maksim Zadorin, et al., University of Lapland, 2017 [35]**

[https://lauda.ulapland.fi/bitstream/handle/10024/62960/RussianLawsIndPeoplesWthCommentary\\_NArFU\\_UArctic\\_2017.pdf?sequence=2](https://lauda.ulapland.fi/bitstream/handle/10024/62960/RussianLawsIndPeoplesWthCommentary_NArFU_UArctic_2017.pdf?sequence=2)

#### Overview:

The present Federal Law in accordance with the Constitution of the Russian Federation, the conventional principles and regulations of international law and

international treaties of the Russian Federation shall determine the legal foundations of guarantees of the unique social, economic and cultural development of indigenous small-numbered peoples of the Russian Federation, protection of their native habitat, traditional way of life, economic activities and crafts.

Current & Relevant Information:

**Commentary:**

The preamble of the federal law refers to the Constitution of the Russian Federation, namely to Part 4 of Article 15, which sets the priority of principles and norms of international law and international treaties of the Russian Federation in comparison to federal laws. The Article 69, guaranteeing the rights of «indigenous small-numbered peoples» is being referred to as well. The paragraph «m» of Article 72, which determines that both the federal center and the regions jointly protect the original habitat and the traditional way of life of «small ethnic communities» is also should be mentioned. There is no unambiguous opinion among lawyers whether these terms are synonymous or not, however it is generally assumed that this is one and the same. At the same time, it is extremely important to say that according to the Article. 125 of the Constitution, all international treaties concluded by Russia must comply with the Constitution; otherwise, they do not have legal force on the territory of the state.

**“Improving dialogue among researchers, local and indigenous peoples and decision-makers to address issues of climate change in the North,” Terry V. Callaghan, et al., *Ambio*, 2020 [36]**

<https://link.springer.com/content/pdf/10.1007/s13280-019-01277-9.pdf>

Abstract:

The Circumpolar North has been changing rapidly within the last decades, and the socioeconomic systems of the Eurasian Arctic and Siberia in particular have displayed the most dramatic changes. Here, anthropogenic drivers of environmental change such as migration and industrialization are added to climate induced changes in the natural environment such as permafrost thawing and increased frequency of extreme events. Understanding and adapting to both types of changes are important to local and indigenous peoples in the Arctic and for the wider global community due to transboundary connectivity. As local and indigenous peoples, decision-makers and scientists perceive changes and impacts differently and often fail to communicate efficiently to respond to changes adequately, we convened a meeting of the three groups in Salekhard in 2017. The outcomes of the meeting include perceptions of how the three groups each perceive the main issues affecting health and well-being and recommendations for working together better.

Current & Relevant Information:

**Introduction**



The Circumpolar North has been changing rapidly within the last decades, and the socioeconomic systems of the Eurasian Arctic and Siberia in particular have displayed the most dramatic changes (Forbes et al. 2009; Kumpula et al. 2012). In this region, anthropogenic drivers of environmental change such as migration, industrialization and urbanization (Orttung and Reisser 2014) are added to climate-induced changes in the natural environment, for example warming of the atmosphere, reduced area of sea ice, permafrost thawing and increased frequency of extreme events (AMAP 2017a). Understanding and adapting to both types of changes are important to both the local peoples in the Circumpolar North (Anisimov and Orttung 2018) and the wider global community as changes to climate conditions in one part of the Earth have knock-on effects for other regions (e.g., Francis and Vavrus 2012). Coping with threats and gaining benefits from the evolving changes are both possible responses but choices should be informed by the best available knowledge. Global warming has been most pronounced in the Arctic during the last decades (Overland et al. 2017). The largest landmass in the region, Siberia (total area 13 million km<sup>2</sup>), is, however, relatively little studied. Because of the vast size of Siberia, its impacts on its local populations and its potential feedbacks to global climate, it should be a priority for research. Nevertheless, Siberia should not be studied in isolation: it is part of the Earth System and several environmental and socioeconomic processes share analogues in other Arctic regions, e.g., permafrost thaw, migration and traditional life style changes. Studies which compare processes and responses between Arctic regions are therefore crucial in order to expedite dissemination of knowledge and coping strategies.

Attempts to cap the global temperature increase by mitigation of CO<sub>2</sub> emissions have so far failed. Compared to the initial caps set in the Paris Agreement (Horowitz 2016), of 1° C, and then below 2° C globally, compared to pre-industrial levels, the mean annual surface temperature in the north of Siberia has increased markedly by about 4° C over the past 50 years. Also, the frequency and intensity of weather extremes (both rainfall and temperature) have increased with an associated increase in the frequency of large and severe wildfires and dust storms which have impacts that often extend far beyond Siberia and Northern Eurasia, affecting even global markets and raising concerns about global food security (Groisman et al. 2017).

Therefore, the need to adapt to a future, warmer climate in Siberia is urgent. Simplistically, adaptation requires (i) identification of the problem by researchers and local peoples, (ii) planned responses by researchers, local peoples and decision-makers, (iii) implementation of planned responses by decision-makers and local peoples and (iv) monitoring of the effects of adaptation and mitigation strategies by researchers and local peoples. This scheme requires that researchers, local peoples and decision-makers work together better than at present. To achieve this goal and to provoke thoughtful dialogues, an international meeting was held to bring together representatives of local and indigenous peoples, researchers and decision-makers, with a focus on issues related to climate change impacts in the Arctic.

The methodology behind this study is to summarize the results of the 2nd Siberian Environmental Change Network (SecNet: <http://www.secnet.online/home-eng.html>) workshop “Winter Weather and Climate Extremes: how can researchers, authorities and local peoples work together to record, predict and adapt?” held in Salekhard, Russia on 1–3rd November 2017. The workshop was co-organized by INTERACT (<https://eu-interact.org/>). The workshop’s methodology was to bring representatives of the three groups (researchers, local peoples and decision-makers) together. The main objective of this study was to explore how to improve communications, make research more relevant to local needs and facilitate adaptation actions. The methodology and format of the meeting gave the participants an opportunity to discuss issues of concern to them in groups and to present the main outcomes of the discussion in plenum to identify possible solutions for future collaboration. In this study, we present issues perceived as important by each group and present jointly agreed recommendations.

## **Conclusions**

Ongoing climate change and societal development in Siberia and other northern areas affect local communities and livelihoods as well as general developments in society. The ongoing and projected rapid changes in natural systems (climate and ecosystems), extreme events, new pests and diseases, and new opportunities (sea transport routes, crops, tourism, etc.) all put pressure on society to adapt—from individuals, households and communities to regional, national and global institutions.

A communication platform for information exchange and cooperation is required for the dialogue between local and indigenous peoples, decision-makers and scientists. Such a platform can be used to develop potential environmental hazard detection systems, discuss research and monitoring priorities and discuss adaptation needs that benefit all groups.

Bringing indigenous peoples, decision-makers and researchers together has started this process at a small-scale and has led to a new state-of-the-art understanding based on different perceptions of similar phenomena and a dialogue has been established among the three groups resulting in an agreed resolution. It is important to highlight that the representatives of the different groups have completely different perceptions of the events happening in everyday life so hardly ever understand each other in official dialogue. The format of the workshop described here forced the different groups to listen to the other side, giving participants insights into the other groups’ ways of thinking and thus helped to overcome perceived obstacles to effective communication between the groups. Furthermore, the study is state-of-the-art in making perceptions from discussions among Russian decision-makers, indigenous peoples and researchers globally accessible.

Since the meeting, all three groups have worked together successfully to achieve some of the aims and recommendations presented here: indigenous peoples are

working with scientists and decision-makers to establish new research stations and environmental monitoring sites, and a citizen science program is developing centered on Nadym that involves indigenous peoples, scientists, health workers and oil and gas employees. Hopefully, these small steps will multiply quickly.

**“Real People: Will They Survive in the 21st Century?” Larisa T. Abriutina, Cultural Survival, 26 March 2010 [37] <https://www.culturalsurvival.org/publications/cultural-survival-quarterly/real-people-will-they-survive-21st-century>**

#### Overview:

With the collapse of the Soviet Union and the opening of Russian society to the scrutiny of the West, the problems faced by the Indigenous Peoples of the Russian North have finally begun to receive international attention. Many of these issues are similar to those faced by Indigenous Peoples elsewhere: land tenure, self-determination, cultural survival. The deteriorating state of the health of the Russian North's Indigenous Peoples and their lack of access to adequate health care have yet to receive sufficient attention. The public health care system in this region has suffered greatly, both from cutbacks in the midst of recurring economic crises, as well as from the lack of preparation for the conditions of the North among medical personnel. Nowhere has this been truer than in the far eastern region of Chukotka.

#### Current & Relevant Information:

Chukotka lies directly west of Alaska. These northern twins are divided both by the narrow Bering Strait and by the enormous gulf between their different state systems. The name Chukotka is taken from the word 'Chukchi' -- the name the Russians long ago gave one of the native peoples of the peninsula. The Chukchi's self-designation is I'gyoravetlan, which means "the real people." As a result of Soviet-era immigration by Russians, Ukrainians, and other Soviet peoples, Chukchis and other Indigenous Peoples of Chukotka (Evens, Koryaks, Yupiks, Chuvans, and Yukagirs) make up less than 20 percent of the region's population. Today some Chukchi live in cities, working primarily as teachers, journalists, artisans, administration functionaries, wage laborers, and in museums and cultural centers. Most, however, live (as they did in the past) in small villages or in the tundra, tending herds of domestic reindeer, catching fish, and hunting. The Chukchi and roughly 30 other Indigenous Peoples of the North, Siberia and the Far East of Russia continue to engage in these traditional subsistence activities. The approximate population of the Peoples of the North across Russia today is just under 200,000; the Chukchi themselves number about 15,000.

**“Chukchi,” Minority Rights Group International, December 2020 [38] <https://minorityrights.org/minorities/chukchi/>**

#### Abstract:

According to the 2010 national census, there are 15,908 Chukchi in the Russian Federation. Chukchi are ethnically close to Koryak and speak one of the Chukotic languages. The Chukchi literary language was created in 1931 using the Cyrillic script. Chukchi live primarily in the Chukchi Republic, formerly the Chukchi Autonomous Okrug (AOk) in the north-eastern part of Magadan Oblast and in adjacent areas and in the Koryak AOOk.

#### Current & Relevant Information:

The Chukchi confront problems of linguistic assimilation through industrial and urban development in Chukotka. Chukchi leaders have called for the creation of national parks in the Chukchi republic in order for traditional reindeer herding to be preserved. According to a study on indigenous reindeer husbandry, submitted for the 11th Session of the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues in 2012, reindeer herders in the Sakha Republic face numerous financial difficulties. Around 75 per cent of reindeer pastures in the Sakha Republic are located in the forests; since forestry is managed on the federal level, all the reindeer herders have to register their pastures and pay rental fees that are very high in some regions.

Chukchis are the subject of many derogatory Russian jokes, due to their association with a remote and rural culture. In April 2014, three representatives of the Chukchi people filed a civil claim to the Zamoskvoretsky Moscow City Court against the editors of the Big Russian Explanatory Dictionary, who referred to a 'chukcha' in one of their definitions as to a 'naive and narrow-minded person'. Subsequently, their claim was dismissed.

#### D. Dolgan [Russia]:

**“Dolgan People,” Britannica, 7 December 2024 [39]**

<https://www.britannica.com/topic/Dolgan>

#### Overview:

**Dolgan**, Turkic-speaking people [constituting](#) the basic population of the [Taymyr autonomous okrug](#), which is far above the [Arctic Circle](#) in north-central [Russia](#). They numbered about 6,000 in the late 20th century.

The Dolgan migrated to the area from the southwest, presumably in the 18th century. The nucleus of the Dolgan people was formed from a few [Evenk](#) (Evenki) clans that subsequently adopted a [dialect](#) of the Turkic-speaking [Sakha](#) (Yakut). Before the [Russian Revolution](#) of 1917 the Dolgan were organized into clans, headed by clan elders. In the late 20th century they were principally [reindeer](#) herders, collectivized under the Soviets, though their way of life was only gradually becoming less nomadic. Vegetable gardening had become important, along with traditional game hunting.

**“Dolgan in Russia,” Joshua Project [40]**  
[https://joshuaproject.net/people\\_groups/11593/RS](https://joshuaproject.net/people_groups/11593/RS)

#### Overview:

Dolgan means "people living on the middle reach of the water". The Dolgans live in the territory of Taimyr, Dolgan-Nenetsky Autonomous District, Krasnoyarsky Kray and Anabar Ulus, Sakha Republic (Yakutia) and in the vast territory from the west side of the Lower Yenisei River to the east of the Anabar river. The Dolgan's population is about 7,261 according to a census in 2002, and they are spread out between different locations. The most common language used is Yakut. The first writings in the seventeenth century were about Anabar where Dolgans have their settlements. The writings say that some marksmen groups were trekking from Mongolia to a new land on the Anabar River for the Tsar's army.

In the beginning of the seventeenth century on the Lower Anabar, there were ancestors of Avashsky Nganasans called Tavgi who migrated to the west. Under Tungus (Evenks) pressure, the ancestors were forced out of Central Yakutia. According to a famous Soviet historian, Gurvich I.S., the Yakuts pushed into the lands in the middle of the seventeenth century. There was a migration to the middle of Yenisei and Khatanga Rivers on the Taimyr Peninsula at approximately the same time. When the Russians came to Taimyr and the adjacent coastlands in the eighteenth to nineteenth centuries, different ethnic groups lived side by side on the severe land. With all the different groups mixing together in one area, it created the formation of a totally unique ethnic community. The different languages and life styles eventually became the primary foundation of the future Dolgan ethnic group today. The Dolgan have three tribal groups known as: the Dolgans, the Dongots, and the Edyans.

#### Current & Relevant Information:

During the daily lives of the Dolgans, they hunt, fish, and breed deer. Ilia Spiridonov, a Dolgan from Anabar, was the first award-winning deer-breeder in 1957. There are a lot of other deer-breeders and hunters that have been awarded with different medals and orders of USSR and Russia. In the republic there are recognized poets such as Kyltasov S., Shubin K., and Tunrin L. Also, Spiridonov U. is a professional artist, not just known in his republic but also in Russia and other countries as well. There is a popular children's musical group called "Heiro", as well as other amateur performances in the republic.

The Dolgan women are very skillful at making national clothes, decorating the deer equipment, and other household things for their nomadic way of life. Dolgans have compacted settlements in Yurunkhaya village by the Sea of Laptevs. The present day Dolgans do not identify themselves with the Yakuts or the Evenks. Seven hundred thirty-two Dolgans live in Anabar Ulus, giving them a higher percentage of people living there. In Anabar Ulus, they have their own high school, medical station,

kindergarten, and a small cinema. However, the cinema is old so they are planning to build a new cultural center. Because of the different climatic conditions and a lack of elementary facilities, it has been difficult for them to attract teachers there. Therefore, some of the students graduate school without taking some of the main subjects. Social problems include alcoholism, unemployment, and poverty. The Dolgans also have no writing of their own, therefore they use Russian writing. They cannot use the Yakut script because it is unfamiliar to them, making it unsuitable for use in their schools.

**“Dolgan,” Minority Rights Group International, December 2020 [41]**

<https://minorityrights.org/minorities/dolgan/>

Overview:

According to the 2010 national census, there are 7,885 Dolgan in the Russian Federation. Dolgan are a Turkic people of Tungusic origin. They speak a dialect of the Sakha language and are being assimilated by Sakha, but still retain a separate identity. They live in the Taimyr (Dolgano-Nenets) Autonomous Okrug. There are some Christian additions to their shamanist-animist religion.

Current & Relevant Information:

In 2005 the populations of the Taimyr Autonomous Okrug (AOk), the Evenk AOк and Krasnoyarsk Krai, voted in favor of the unification of the three regions in a referendum. The unification took place in January 2007.

In October 2013, deputies of the State Assembly of the Republic of Sakha (Yakutia) met their colleagues from the Taimyr Dolgan-Nenets region. The meeting was devoted to the preservation of the traditions and culture of the peoples of the north, as well as to cooperation between Dolgan in the Sakha Republic and Krasnoyarsk Krai. Elena Glomareva, the people’s deputy of the Republic of Sakha, expressed her concerns about the lack of teaching materials in the Dolgan language. The group called for an increase in the availability of newspapers, books and other publications in the native language, as well as the teaching of Dolgan at schools.

In September 2014, negotiations between the Dolgan minority and representatives of the Surgutneftegas company took place in the village of Dubinka. The locals expressed concern about the company’s plans to build two large structures for mining purposes, opposing their construction as a threat to the deer who migrate through the area. Moreover, the Dolgan representatives expressed their community’s fear of losing its traditional hunting and fishing grounds.

**“Dolgans,” B.C. Alexander, Arctic Photo, 2020 [42]**

<https://www.arcticphoto.com/polar-info/polar-info22.htm>

Overview:

The Dolgans live on the Taymyr Peninsula in the central Siberian Arctic. They number about 7,000 and nowadays, they are mainly to be found living in settlements along the Dudypa, Kheta and Khatanga Rivers as well as the shores of Khatanga Bay. The Dolgans have the youngest Arctic culture, which only was recognized in the 19th Century. Scientists believe that the Dolgan evolved from a mixture of three other northern Siberian cultures, the Yakut, Evenk and Nenets. Their territory consists largely of open tundra and has a particularly harsh climate. The Khatanga area, for example, has an average January temperature of minus 33.8° Celsius with frequent winter storms. Just to the south of their territory in Taymyr lies the port of Dudinka and the industrial town of Norilsk whose pollutants are found right across the Arctic.

#### Current & Relevant Information:

Their traditional economy is based on a combination of reindeer breeding, hunting wild reindeer, as well as other game, trapping and fishing. The reindeer herders follow the common system of moving north in the spring and south in the autumn following traditional migration routes. These are changed each year, so that the group returns to the original route every fourth year, depending on the condition of the pastures. Slaughtering of domestic reindeer is normally done in November, when the reindeer are closest to the herders' villages. Dolgan reindeer herders use baloks rather than tents. These are small huts, mounted on sled runners and insulated with reindeer skin. They have small stoves in them which burn coal that the herders bring from the villages. Most Dolgans nowadays live in settlements. Often these villages are small with only a few hundred people with wooden houses heated by coal. The facilities are usually very basic with no mains water or sewage system.

#### Social Issues:

**“Indigenous Population of the Arctic and North: Traditional Economic Activity – Ethno-Preserved Life Style,” Vladimir Igorevich and Kunney Nikolaevna, Electronic Scientific Journal, 2013 [43]**

<http://www.arcticandnorth.ru/upload/uf/740/an12.pdf#page=22>

#### Abstract:

At present, the main problem of indigenous people should be marked as a created trend, which formed out indigenous people from maintaining the traditional way of life and of the kinds of the tradition-al economic activities of indigenous people to move to cities and towns, where in this population problems of the social integration and employment that leads to a crisis of their development, the gradual loss of cultural and national begun.

#### Current & Relevant Information:

Currently, the province is inhabited by eight ethnic minorities: Dolgan, chum, Selkups, Ne-nets, nganasans, Chulyms, Evenki and Enets. On 1 January 2011 the



total number of indigenous peoples living in the Krasnoyarsk region was about 16 thousand people, including traditional types of economic activity of about 3 million people, including: Taimyr Dolgan-Nenets Municipal area - about 2 thousand people Evenk municipal district - about 670 people; Turuk-hansky, Yenisei, North Yeniseysky Tyukhtet areas - about 330 people.

The total number of the business entities minorities accounted for about 260 households. The main types of the traditional economic activities of the indigenous people in the Krasnoyarsk Territory are: livestock, including nomadic (reindeer breeding, horse breeding), commercial hunting, processing and sale of the products of hunting, logging and non-timber forest resources for their own needs, gathering (harvesting, processing and implementation of food forest resources, collection of the medicinal plants).

Industrial development of the territories inhabited by the indigenous people of the North cannot be initiated without prior discussion of the problems that may adversely affect the living conditions of the population and conservation of the indigenous people. To do this, there are several good reasons.

First, you need to take into account the interests of unique, even if small in number people for whom the North is home, the place of the residence and work. Their culture formed under the special climatic conditions, has enduring value and global importance as a model of human adaptation to extreme conditions of the North.

Second, the revision of the international standards in the relation to the indigenous people worldwide recognition of their rights (2007) has led to an increase in the political activity leaders, and indigenous movement has acquired a certain political weight and has a great influence on the activities of the legislative and executive branches.

Third, it can be stated that the processes of the formation of the market relations in the North, compared with other regions of the central and southern parts, is more painful. Territories inhabited by the indigenous people have lower rates of the socio-economic development. Low life expectancy, high infant mortality, the incidence of tuberculosis and alcoholism, unemployment, suicide - this is an incomplete list of indicators, where indigenous people of the North "leaders" among other people in the country. Migration to the North due to its industrial development of the migrant population has created serious problems that previously were not - Aboriginal assimilation and acculturation.

In a particularly difficult situation were the traditional economic activities. Near the base of the traditional crafts villages undermined by numerous forest fires and for the remote fishing lack the financial means. As a result, along with a reduction in the number of the domestic reindeer from the 90s., Halfway decreased fish, furs. Stopped accepting procuring-governmental organizations mushrooms, berries, pine nuts and herbs. Because of the high cost of airline and other transport a large

proportion of the products are not exported to the place of its implementation, was deteriorating. This, in turn, deprives the indigenous population of motivation in the development of the traditional crafts, undermines the material basis of their existence.

Fighting nomadism, separation of the children from their families violated the age-old succession led to a crippling shortage of the staff in the traditional industries, on the one hand, and the inability of the youngest people to adapt to the modern conditions of life - on the other. Entire generations have been sidelined and are an active life. Along with all this intense commercial development without stability, and low productivity of the northern Bio systems is a major factor in the deterioration and shrinkage of the peoples of the North.

Traditional agriculture is critical to the livelihoods of the indigenous people, is a guarantor of the preservation of their culture and traditions. This fact necessitates the preservation of the traditional activities and promotes their development. In considering this as a strategic task to consider the ever-changing conditions of the external economic and legal environment as well as to consider the strengths and weaknesses of the traditional economy.

**“Traditional Nature Management Areas as Means of Organizing the Economic Activities of the Siberian Arctic’s Indigenous Minorities,” Natalia P. Koptseva, et al., International Review of Management and Marketing, 2016 [44]**  
<https://core.ac.uk/download/pdf/81247148.pdf>

Abstract:

Since 2010, researchers have inhabited indigenous settlements, conducting field studies on the ways of preserving indigenous peoples’ unique economic, environmental and cultural practices. The processes of new industrial reclamation of the Siberian Arctic have a direct effect on the area’s indigenous populations living in the Arctic zone, including the Turukhan Area and Taymyr’s Dolgano-Nenets Municipal District within the Krasnoyarsk Krai. In this area, traditional economic activities are practiced by the Nenets, the Evenks, the Evens, the Nganasans, the Dolgans, and the Selkups. The majority of experts believe that creating traditional nature management areas with a proper legal underpinning will enable a shift from the policy of state paternalism to the policy of strategic partnership between indigenous peoples and large financial and industrial groups, with state and local authorities assuming the role of mediators and guarantors. The Krasnoyarsk Krai is currently in the process of building a legal foundation for the creation of traditional nature management areas locally, which may make it possible to implement the ethnocultural standards of improving the quality of living for the Siberian Arctic’s indigenous minorities.

Current & Relevant Information:

## Introduction

Today, industrial nature management processes are actively developing in the Siberian Arctic. Traditional nature management activities peculiar to the Siberian Arctic's indigenous inhabitants are currently undergoing a serious economic and ecological crisis, which threatens to destroy these inhabitants' unique economic, environmental and cultural practices. Experts believe that such traditional nature management territories (TNMTs), if created in the compact settlement areas of the Siberian Arctic's indigenous peoples, will preserve their traditional economy and open the way to innovative technological reforms of traditional management methods (Shishatskiy et al., 2012; Koptseva and Kirko, 2014a; Kirko and Zakharova, 2013). Such entities as indigenous business leaders, indigenous public organizations, opinion leaders are interested in the innovative reforms of the indigenous peoples' traditional economy and committed to the cultural heritage of the Siberian Arctic's indigenous peoples and its preservation.

This paper analyzes traditional nature management activities in Taymyrsky Dolgano-Nenetsky Municipal District, one of the Siberian Arctic's regions. Until 2007, the district existed as Taymyr Autonomous District, a federal subject of Russia. Since 2007, it has been a part of the Krasnoyarsk Krai.

**“Climate Change and Human Mobility in Indigenous Communities of the Russian North,” Susan A. Crate, Brookings LSE: Project on Internal Displacement, 30 January 2013 [45] <https://www.refworld.org/pdfid/510a3ca52.pdf>**

### Summary:

This paper explores the effects of climate change on human mobility (displacement, migration, and planned relocations) in the Russian part of northern Eurasia, with a particular emphasis on indigenous communities. The paper is based on almost twenty years of longitudinal research with Viliui Sakha, one indigenous group of northeastern Siberia with a specific focus on local perceptions and responses to the effects of global climate change. In-depth examination of the effects of climate change on the Viliui Sakha, followed by a survey of responses to climate change and relocation within the Sakha Republic, is supplemented by three 'mini-case studies' of other indigenous groups in the Russian North: the Nenets, the Dolgan and Nganasan of the Taimyr Peninsula and the Chukotka- Chukchi and Siberian Yupik. The study then turns to the response of indigenous peoples and the Russian government to these changes and concludes with recommendations for indigenous groups, the government and other groups.

### Current & Relevant Information:

Prior to mid-seventeenth century Russian colonization, mobility was key to the livelihoods for the varied reindeer-herding, hunting/gathering, and pastoralist peoples inhabiting northern Eurasia. Russian colonization of these areas began to

change that essential adaptive strategy. But the historical period that had by far the most dramatic effect on northern Russia's indigenous peoples' mobility and livelihoods and that introduced massive migrations and relocations was the Soviet period. With the 1917 October Revolution, and the 1922 establishment of the U.S.S.R., the feudal Russian system was transformed into a distinctive socialist one. The process was long, marked by five-year plans for collectivization and industrialization of both rural and urban life (Forsyth 1992: 283). Forced collectivization policies entailed relocations and resettlements into increasingly compact agro-industrial production centers. This meant the gradual transformation of the economy from decentralized production, involving subsistence activities that necessitated movement across the land, to centralized production based on concentrating breeding and growing operations in place. In accord with the resettlement and relocation for collectivization, non-Slavic peoples were categorized to designate them areas for inhabitation and production. In the 1920s the government divided the indigenous groups of the Russian North into two categories based on the size of their populations: 1) minority or 'small numbered' peoples, for those groups with less than 50,000 persons, and 2) 'big-numbered' or titular nations, for all non-Slavic peoples above that number.

As a result, the sparse pre-Soviet settlement pattern of the Russian North changed immensely. Settlement policies forced nomadic and semi-nomadic subsistence peoples to stay in one place in order to school their children and have their production accounted for. Collectivization policies led to the concentration of populations into larger and larger food production units. Additionally, the relocation of 'specialists' from western Russia to serve as technological experts in the Soviet modernization plan altered the demographics of communities in the Russian North.

The coercive Soviet resettlement of indigenous peoples from small settlements into larger villages had a profound effect on indigenous communities, destroying the foundational ecological and social relationships that underpinned subsistence livelihoods. Furthermore, resettlement often meant that families were divided as children were sent to state boarding schools. Inhabitants were separated from their birth lands to work in mass production in centralized locations, leaving them little time, if any, to engage in historically-based subsistence practices.

It was during the Soviet era that the government designated 16 regions as parts of the 'Far North' (Kraynyy Sever) (Rosstat 2006). Of the 16 regions, 11 were homelands of non-Russian ethnic groups, most of whom were in residence long before seventeenth century Russian colonization. Reflecting the ecological sparseness of the extreme northern ecosystems, human population densities in the Far North are typically low. For example, although the Russian North makes up 53 percent of the country's territory, in the post-Soviet era it is home to a mere 5.6 percent of the Russian Federation's population (Heleniak 2009b:33). Even so, in comparison with other circumpolar regions, the region's population is relatively

dense. If compared to the 2001 population of northern Canada in 2001, northern Russia at the time had 46 people per square kilometer in comparison with 3.

Up until the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991, many inhabitants of northern Russia were 'temporary,' lured to the north mostly from western areas of the Soviet Union by a combination of Soviet planned economic incentives and state-regulated migration. Since then, many of the temporary population, (mostly Russians, Ukrainians and Belorussians) have left the region to return to their homelands. By 2009 one of every six people (17 percent of the population) had migrated out of the Russian North (Heleniak 2009a:129). In the post-Soviet context, the indigenous peoples of northern Russia number approximately 250,000 individuals belonging to forty-one different peoples, comprising less than 0.2 percent of the entire northern Russian population (Nuttall 2005).

**“Post-Soviet practice of preserving ethnocultural identity of indigenous peoples of the North and Siberia in Krasnoyarsk Region of the Russian Federation,”**

**Natalia P. Koptseva and Vladimir I. Kirko, Life Science Journal, 2014 [46]**

[http://www.lifesciencesite.com/ljsj/life1107/022\\_24107life110714\\_180\\_185.pdf](http://www.lifesciencesite.com/ljsj/life1107/022_24107life110714_180_185.pdf)

Abstract:

The article presents the results of many years of field research of small-numbered indigenous peoples of the North and Siberia, resident in the territory of Krasnoyarsk Region (the Russian Federation). At the present time small-numbered indigenous peoples of Krasnoyarsk Region (the Evenks, Enets, Chulyms, Nganasans, Nenets, Selkups, Kets, Dolgans) are exposed to serious influence of modernization and global transformations. Ethnogeny and culture genesis processes are not the same for these ethnocultural groups. Some post-Soviet cultural practices support formation of a positive ethnocultural identity of indigenous peoples of the North and Siberia. Museumization of the Nganasan culture (an indigenous Siberian people resident only in Krasnoyarsk region) confirms the conclusion that Taymyr Neo-Shamanism is significantly different from the Shamanism of archaic and traditional cultures. Museumization of the Nganasan cultural heritage points out that the culture experiences a strong impact of modern market mechanisms. True Shamanism is no longer typical of the ethnocultural identity of the Nganasans.

Current & Relevant Information:

**Introduction**

There are two main opinions expressed in modern ethnical and cultural researches. The first of them is based on claiming self-sustainability, invariability (stability) of a certain culture. Supporters of this opinion suggest, that every culture is spread in a strictly outlined geographical area. From the point of view of these researchers, globalization does not influence the existence and development of local cultures. Soviet Age researchers of indigenous peoples of the North and Siberia used to stick

to this opinion. It was clearly manifested in their primordialism and articulated by the most authoritative Soviet ethnologist, Yuri Bromley (2009). This point of view of Soviet ethnographers and ethnologists was typical of their researches of indigenous cultures of the North and Siberia (Khomich, 2003; Volodin, 2003). If Soviet ethnologists found any dynamics of the cultures, they would arrive at the conclusion that all changes of the indigenous cultures are the result of communication between individuals within the framework of one given cultural group, not a result of intercultural communications and/or global influence (Northern Encyclopaedia, 2004).

The second point of view emerges from the fact that cultures of all modern societies are varied. Practically, all modern societies are conglomerates, systems of multiple cultural groups with a stable social communication system and common social life. Representatives of such researchers insist, that terms “small group”, “ethnic minority”, “national minorities” should be replaced with “ethnocultural group” (Berry et al. 2002). This opinion leads us to a very important conclusion. At the present moment it is wrong to see reasons of people’s actions as influences of certain cultures. Behavior of a people is not determined by a single cultural group. Ethnogeny and culture genesis are permanent processes. Processes of emergence of new ethnocultural groups, forming under constant cultural influence, is never ending in the world. For this reason, the efforts of ethnocultural group researchers should be focused on the behavior of people who belong to the ethnocultural groups. It is necessary to study, which cultural practices are used by people for preserving their ethnical and cultural identity (Branch, 2001; Greene et al., 2006; Kiang et al., 2010; Kiang et al., 2006; Phinney & Ong, 2007).

Researches of modern ethnocultural identity processes of indigenous peoples of the North and Siberia during the post-Soviet period are impossible to be carried out without considering the global transformations making impact on the groups. Indigenous peoples of the North and Siberia are vulnerable to a series of economic, political, cultural influences. The major role in ethnogeny of small numbered indigenous peoples of the North and Siberia in post-Soviet time is played by the influence of industrial and urbanized Russian society (Kirko & Zakharova, 2013; Kirko et al., 2010; Koptseva & Luzan, 2012; Amosov et al., 2012). At the present time, the Russian Federation is going through reindustrialization of Northern and Arctic territories. The activities of the largest economic players (such financial and industrial groups as “Rosneft”, “Gazprom” and others) in the areas of indigenous peoples’ compact residence make a huge impact on the ethnogeny and culture genesis of the peoples (Pal’chin, 2013; Semenova, 2010).

At the same time indigenous peoples of the North and Siberia, resident in the Northern and Arctic territories of the Russian Federation, are active participants of indigenous peoples’ associations. There are multiple social organizations of indigenous peoples of the North and Siberia, which, with the help of modern

information technologies, provide intensive interaction between various ethnocultural groups of indigenous peoples. Modern information technologies enhance the presence of Northern and Siberian indigenous peoples in the world; now their voice is heard as a voice of a large community. The political significance of the modern indigenous peoples, which is currently studied by multiple sociologists and humanitarian researchers, cannot be ignored (Feagin 1984; Francis, 1976; Gordon, 1976; Helm, 1965).

However, post-Soviet researchers of the Northern and Siberian indigenous peoples turn to obsolete methodology and old-fashioned ethnological conceptions, while it is required to study the ethnocultural groups not as a static phenomenon, but in the dynamics of ethnogeny and culture genesis.

**“The Compensation for Losses to Indigenous Peoples Due to the Arctic Industrial Development in Benefit Sharing Paradigm,” Violetta Gassiy and Ivan Potravny, Resources, 18 April 2019 [47]**

[https://www.researchgate.net/publication/332518209\\_The\\_Compensation\\_for\\_Losses\\_to\\_Indigenous\\_Peoples\\_Due\\_to\\_the\\_Arctic\\_Industrial\\_Development\\_in\\_Benefit\\_Sharing\\_Paradigm](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/332518209_The_Compensation_for_Losses_to_Indigenous_Peoples_Due_to_the_Arctic_Industrial_Development_in_Benefit_Sharing_Paradigm)

Abstract:

This article discusses the results of research on the benefit sharing system in Russia focusing on compensation of losses to indigenous peoples due to industrial development in the Arctic. The authors analyzed a Russian case-study on the economic mechanisms of coordination and harmonization of multi-vector and conflicting interests in the process of industrial development of traditional lands. The developed recommendations will allow, on the one hand, compensating the losses of the indigenous communities, and, on the other hand, to engage indigenous peoples in the process of environmental management and socio-economic development of their territories. The object of the research was the Republic of Sakha and the indigenous communities of the remote Anabar region. The calculation of losses was considered. The authors suggest using this tool for the traditional land development, because it helps to define fair compensation due to project impacts and to form a fund for sustainable community development. The considered project was exploring and extracting placer diamonds in Polovinnaya River in Yakutia. This paper also presents the social poll results organized in the indigenous communities in 2017. The results helped to formulate the recommendations for the business on benefit sharing agreements with Anabar communities.

Current & Relevant Information:

**Introduction**

Currently, large-scale investment projects are being implemented in the Russian Arctic to develop eight core zones: Kola, Arkhangelsk, Nenets, Vorkuta, Yamalo-



Nenets, Taimyr-Turukhanskiy, Northern Yakutia and Chukotka. Some Russian regions located in the north are the most important strategic territories in terms of natural resources development, exploration and extraction of many minerals (hydrocarbons, gold, silver, diamonds, platinum, ferrous and non-ferrous metals, rare earth raw materials, etc.). At the same time, the intensive development of these territories is often accompanied by the impact on the traditional lands of indigenous peoples and is in contradiction with their way of life and traditional crafts, complicating their livelihoods, including the land withdrawing process used by indigenous communities. These projects are largely related to the exploration and mining of raw materials, transport and economic infrastructure development or military security reasons. The investment projects implementation on core zones development in the Russian Arctic may affect the territories of traditional nature use and influence the traditional lands of the indigenous peoples of the North. Insufficient consideration of the environmental and ethnological component in the justification and implementation of such investment projects in the territories of traditional residence and traditional economic activities of indigenous peoples can lead to conflicts. The purpose of the article is to improve theoretical approaches and methods, currently used in Russia, for estimating possible losses of indigenous peoples that arise from the impact of exploration and mining of mineral resources in their traditional territories.

**“The Dolgan Indigenous Peoples and Oil and Gas Development in Russia,”  
Indigenous People’s Issues Today, 5 July 2008 [48]**

<http://indigenoussuestoday.blogspot.com/2008/07/dolgan-indigenous-peoples-and-oil-and.html>

Overview:

The Dolgan (meaning "people living on the middle reaches of the river") indigenous peoples of the Arctic are experiencing many challenges in the face of climate change and the growing drive in Russia to exploit Arctic oil, gas, and coal deposits. Descendants of several Evenki clans (Tungus speaking peoples), who later adopted a dialect of the Turkic-speaking Yakut, the Dolgan indigenous peoples currently form the basic population of the Taymyr Autonomous Okrug (Province) of Russia. Their population is believed to be around 5,500, although there are no recent figures.

Current & Relevant Information:

Migrating from the southwest to their present area of residence in the eighteenth century because of activities in the former Russian empire, they traditionally were nomadic reindeer herders and hunters. Under the Soviet regime they were strongly encouraged to abandon traditional lifeways - especially nomadism. In 1930 the Taimyr, or Dolgan-Nenets National Territory, was proclaimed and the traditional tribal councils were liquidated, and new territorial councils were formed. At the same time the process of collectivization was begun. The result was the complete

destruction of the Dolgans' traditional economy and currently the Dolgan indigenous peoples subsist on agriculture and dairy-farming.

However, their current homeland along the Yenisey and Lena Rivers in Arctic Russia is also the area of growing oil and gas exploration and drilling. The Yenisey River - the largest to drain into the Arctic Ocean - starts high in the Mongolian Plateau and widening further down. This remote region (Tunguska - Тунгуска) is most famous for the 1908 meteorite impact, but is now being explored for oil and gas. As Russia has recently noted, there are plans to construct several new, large hydrocarbon-producing centers in the Lena-Tunguska oil- and gas-bearing province. In the Lena-Tunguska basin of the Siberian-platform, a Large Yurubchen-Tadhom zone of oil and-gas accumulation has been discovered in the sub-salt formations, with-the Yurubcheri and Omorin fields containing the aggregate reserves of more than 1 trillion meters of gas and about 300 million tons of oil.

The Dolgan indigenous peoples are not part of this process, and are largely being left out of any discussions about development of the region and their homeland. Another development project taking place in the region involves tapping into the huge coal reserves found under the ground to feed the growing Russian energy needs. Again, with little say from the Dolgan indigenous peoples.

How the impacts of this new development impact the Dolgan indigenous peoples is still unknown. Because much of their lifeway depends on continued access to large areas of good land for reindeer herding, it is thought that if major oil and gas development does take place traditional pastoral practices will no longer be viable. However, there is little stopping Russia from continuing with this development as indigenous peoples in Russia have comparatively few rights. One organization working to amend this is RAIPON. RAIPON was created in 1990 at the First Congress of Indigenous Peoples of the North. The Association was originally called the "Association of Peoples of the North of the USSR" and united 26 indigenous groups of the North. On November 24, 1993 the Association was registered as public political movement "Association of indigenous peoples of the North, Siberia and Far East of Russian Federation" and on July, 1999 it was reregistered at the RF Ministry of Justice as All-Russia public organization and received the registration number 2174.

#### E. Enets [Russia]:

**"Enets People,"** Encyclopedia Britannica, 15 February 2016 [\[49\]](#)

<https://www.britannica.com/topic/Enets>

#### Overview:

**Enets**, also called **Enet'-enche**, **Yeniseiok**, or **Yenisey Samoyeds**, an [indigenous Arctic people](#) who traditionally resided on the east bank of the

lower [Yenisey River](#) of [Russia](#). They numbered about 300 in the Russian census of 2002.

#### Current & Relevant Information:

The Enets live in the Arctic tundra, a region of permafrost, and are divided into two major groups, the so-called Tundra Enets and the Wood Enets, though smaller divisions also exist. In addition to living in different ecozones, the Tundra and Wood groups each speak a different [dialect](#) of the Enets language, which belongs to the [Uralic language family](#).

The Enets are closely associated with the [Nganasans](#), the [Nenets](#), the [Dolgans](#), and the [Evenks](#) and consider themselves the original inhabitants of the [Taymyr Peninsula](#). Until the Soviet intrusion into this region, the Enets were nomadic hunters and fishers who used domesticated [reindeer](#) as draft animals. Soviet rule brought forced settlement for the Enets and initiated the wholesale destruction of their [environment](#) in the interest of industry.

#### **“Yenisei Samoyed Enets in Russia,” Joshua Project [\[50\]](#)**

[https://joshuaproject.net/people\\_groups/16024/RS](https://joshuaproject.net/people_groups/16024/RS)

#### Overview:

The Enets consider themselves to be the indigenous inhabitants of the Taymyr Peninsula. The main activities have always been hunting and fishing. They have also been nomadic people, dependent on the rhythms of their environment. Although Christianization occurred in the 18th century, it was very superficial, and shamanism and animism have survived until the present day. Under Soviet rule the life of the Enets changed considerably, turning them into a settled people, and that turned their whole life upside down.

#### Current & Relevant Information:

The Enets people live in the far north of Russia where winters can be brutal. No Christian resources are reported as available in the Enets' language.

Younger people in the tribe may speak Russian, and many good resources are available in the Russian language. Perhaps Russian speaking believers from other tribes will carry the Gospel message to the Enets people.

A handful of Russian Orthodox is reported to be among this tribe.

#### **“The Enets,” eki.ee [\[51\]](#) <https://arhiiv.eki.ee/books/redbook/enets.shtml>**

#### Overview:

Enets (enet'-enche) is the self-designation of this ethnic group the original meaning of which is 'a human being, a man'. In most cases the adjective enej -- onaj (real, genuine) is added; i.e., enej enet or 'Enets, a real human being'. In a similar manner

the Enets language is called onaj bazaan 'a real, genuine language'. The name Enets was first used by a linguist and ethnologist, G. Prokofiev, in 1937. It is a version of the pronunciation of nenets.

An earlier and better-known name for the Enets was the Yenisey Samoyeds, derived from their habitat on the Yenisey. This name is still widely used outside the Soviet Union. The general name Samoyed was first used in a chronicle by Monk Nestor. It has been suggested that the word has its origins in the somatu or samatu, used by the Selkup to denote the Enets. Another theory has it as a non-Russian word of unknown origin. The Bai tribe on the Ob has been mentioned in another Russian chronicle (the 11th century).

#### Current & Relevant Information:

**Habitat.** The Enets inhabit the east bank of the River Yenisey in the western part of the Taimyr Peninsula. They belong to the Dudinka and Ust-Yenisey Districts of the Taimyr Autonomous Territory in the Krasnoyarsk region. It is a polar permafrost area, mostly tundra and tundra mountains. The maximum temperature in summer is +13 °C and the average temperature in winter is -30 °C. The Tundra Enets move in an area between the Yenisey and the Pyassina while the Wood Enets live to the north in the center of the Dudinka territory, in wooded tundra.

**Population.** The Enets are the smallest Samoyed ethnic group. Since the census of 1926, there has unfortunately been no further exact data on their numbers gathered. The situation has, however, improved in recent years.

In 1959 only 18 Enets were officially registered in the Taimyr Autonomous Territory. This was the result of ignorance; a part of the Enets were registered as Nenets, and another part as Nganasans. Following this debacle, the census was carried out by an ethnologist, V. Vasilyev, and the result this time was "over 300". The population of the Enets had probably stood at "about 300" for several decades.

As late as 1974 the density of population on the Taimyr was low (42,000 inhabitants per 862,100 square kilometers). In recent years, however, the population has doubled. The native people are more alarmed by the ruinous economic influence and pollution introduced by the newcomers, than by the numbers they have arrived in.

**Anthropologically.** The Enets belong to the Uralic race. Mongoloid and Arctic features are predominant, with only a minor European influence observable. They have broad faces, high cheekbones and slit eyes. Their hair and eyes are dark, and their skin is swarthy. The average height of the male Enets is less than 160 cm. They have no facial hair.

**“The history of the Enets people,” tumbex.com, 2015 [52]**  
<https://www.tumbex.com/uralic-solidarity-blog.tumblr/post/114148818530>

### Overview:

The ancestors of the Enets people were Samoyeds who came from Southern Siberia and the area around river Tom.

The Enets people were first mentioned in a text originated in 15th century Novgorod. In 17th century the Enets people lived a nomad life, the Tundra people around the downstream of the rivers Taz and Yenisey, and the Forest people in the Turuhan river valley. In the end of the century, they had to give way to Nenets and Selkup groups and move to the eastern side of the downstream of Yenisey. The ones that stayed on the west side of Yenisey and around the Taz area were assimilated to the Nenets groups that moved there. In the 1930s' kolkhozes were formed and the Enets people moved to multicultural population centers and were mostly assimilated to the Nenets and Nganasan peoples.

### Current & Relevant Information:

According to Hajdú, in the 60s' hunting and fishing played an important role in the lives of the Forest Enets, while reindeer breeding was the most important source of income for the Tundra Enets. "The Enets way of life was in part like that of the Nenets and in part like that of the Nganasan," he wrote. Enets tents were similar to the Nganasan ones and the cut of their clothing varied, sometimes being alike the Nganasan shape, sometimes of that of the Nenets.

### Social Issues:

**NOTE: No specific information found on the Social Issues of the Enets.**

### F. Eskimo (Yupik) [Russia/US-Alaska]:

**"What's the difference between "Inuit" and "Eskimo"?" Feheley Fine Arts** [\[53\]](https://feheleyfinearts.com/whats-the-difference-between-inuit-and-eskimo/)  
<https://feheleyfinearts.com/whats-the-difference-between-inuit-and-eskimo/>

### Overview:

"Eskimo" used to refer to Inuit and their culture, whether by your grandparents, parents, or maybe even a friend who grew up outside of Canada. It's a term that has been out of date since 1980 when the name "Inuit" (meaning "people" in Inuktitut) was recognized by the [Inuit Circumpolar Council](#) (ICC) to denote Inuit groups across the circumpolar region (Canada, Greenland, USA, and Russia). Today, "Eskimo" is considered a pejorative term. Here's a brief history explaining why.

### Current & Relevant Information:

#### **The etymology of "Eskimo"**

According to Inuk author and translator [Mini Aodla Freeman](#), the term "Eskimo" came from another Indigenous language in Canada: Cree. In Cree, the word is "escheemau" which roughly means "eaters of raw meat." Freeman explains the word

developed after the Cree first encountered Inuit and found them eating raw meat—a way of life the Inuit proudly continue on until this day.

Another theory is that the word has an Innu-aimun origin, a language spoken by the Labrador and Northern Quebec-based Innu. This word is “awassimew/ayassimew” which means, roughly, “one who laces snowshoes.” Originally it may have been used by the Innu to describe the Mi’kmaq and later transferred to the Inuit. Over time, this word too developed into “eater of raw meat” as in Ojibwa (similar to Cree), the prefix “ashk” can mean raw or fresh. The French later translated the word to “esquimaux” which made its way into English use.

### **Why “Eskimo” is pejorative**

Using “Eskimo” today is considered pejorative or derogatory simply because “eater of raw meat” is not how Inuit choose to refer to themselves, and they never did. The word is an exonym—a name given to a group by another group—and its continued use can perpetuate harmful stereotypes. As Mini Aodla Freeman has written: “To me the word ‘Eskimo’ does not mean anything. [...] Inuit differentiated themselves from the animals of nature, not other races.”

The name “Inuit,” however, comes directly from the Inuktitut language and is the preferred term of the Inuit. In 1977, a group of Inuit delegates from across the circumpolar region met in Alaska for the first Inuit Circumpolar Conference. There, they discussed Inuit rights and self-determination. The ICC proceeded to adopt the term “Inuit” to designate all Inuit within the circumpolar region, thereby rejecting the use of “Eskimo.” This is stated in the ICC charter, signed in 1980. [5] To continue to refer to Inuit as “Eskimo” can be viewed as disrespectful toward Inuit self-determination.

### **Where “Eskimo” is used today — in Eskimo art for sale and beyond**

Today you may see “Eskimo” used here and there for few reasons. One is when referring to the name as used within its historical context. For example, early prints like Kiakshuk’s *Eskimo Woman with Fox Trap* (1961) and [Lucy Qinnuayuak](#)’s *Young Eskimo Family* (1965) were titled before the term was acknowledged as derogatory. You may also find that many Eskimo art history books and Eskimo painting catalogues published before 1980 are, naturally, filled with the word. Some key texts have updated their terminology in revised editions, like George Swinton’s seminal 1972 book “Sculpture of the Eskimo,” re-titled “Sculpture of the Inuit” in the 1992 reprint.

In contemporary Eskimo artwork, some Inuit artists have used the word “Eskimo” in their art as an act of subversion. Nunatsiavut artist [Mark Igloliorte](#), for example, created a video piece titled *Eskimo Roll* (2017). In it, Igloliorte films himself capsizing in a kayak, an Inuit invention, using the technique of his Inuit ancestors. Through this act, Igloliorte re-asserts the original function of the kayak before it was appropriated



by non-Inuit for recreational sport, using the title term “Eskimo” as a tongue-and-cheek nod to the non-Inuit exonym. Through artistic license, Igloliorte brings the word and its derogatory power into question.

In Alaska, “Eskimo” is still considered by some as an accepted term to refer to the Yupik. According to the Alaska Native Language Centre (ANLC), Alaskans/Yupik accept “Eskimo” over “Inuit” as the latter is not a word in their language. To the Yupik, “Inuit” refers only to the Inupiat of northern Alaska, the Inuit of Canada, and the Kalaallit of Greenland.

**“Comparative Yupik and Inuit,” Lawrence Kaplan, University of Alaska Fairbanks: Alaska Native Language Center, 1 July 2011 [54]**

[https://www.uaf.edu/anlc/research-and-resources/resources/archives/comparative\\_yupik\\_and\\_inuit.php](https://www.uaf.edu/anlc/research-and-resources/resources/archives/comparative_yupik_and_inuit.php)

#### Overview:

Four distinct Yupik (or Western Eskimo) languages are spoken along the shores of the Gulf of Alaska, in southwestern Alaska, and on the easternmost tip of Siberia. The Inuit (or Eastern Eskimo) language continuum is spoken in northern Alaska, Canada, and Greenland. Another Eskimo language, the virtually extinct Sireniki of Siberia, is usually grouped with the Yupik languages although it may actually constitute a third distinct branch.

#### Current & Relevant Information:

The sound system of the Yupik branch of Eskimo differs from that of the Inuit branch perhaps principally in the following ways:

1. Yupik has a fourth vowel, the shwa (like the e in the word roses), in addition to the three vowels a, i, and u found in all Eskimo (and Aleut; Inuit as a result has two kinds of i, that from original i and that originally from the shwa),
2. the Yupik languages have various forms of rhythmic alternation of stressed and unstressed syllables, while such prosodic systems are absent from Inuit,
3. Yupik lacks the consonant assimilation process so common to Inuit (especially as one travels east), and
4. voiceless fricatives are more prominent in Yupik than in Inuit.

As with these phonological differences, the differences in vocabulary between Inuit and any of the Yupik languages is greater than between any two Yupik languages. For example, while Inuit use *sumiaq* for 'boat', Yupik languages use some form of *angyaq*; while Yupik uses *maklak* for 'bearded seal', Inuit uses *ugruk*. Even words common to both sides will often have a distinctly Yupik version and a distinctly Inuit version. For example, the word for 'leg' is *iru* in all forms of Yupik and *niu* in Inuit, though both forms come from the same ancient Eskimo word.



**“Yupiiit people,” Britannica, 20 Oct 2023 [55] <https://www.britannica.com/topic/Yupik>**

Overview:

Yupiiit, Indigenous Arctic people traditionally residing in Siberia, St. Lawrence Island and the Diomed Islands in the Bering Sea and Bering Strait, and Alaska. They are culturally related to the Chukchi and Inuit, of Canada and Kalaallit Nunaat (Greenland). Although some anthropologists argue that the Yupiiit are culturally distinct from the other Inuit peoples, the Yupiiit have made a political decision to be designated as Inuit.

Current & Relevant Information:

The traditional economic activity of the Yupik was the hunting of sea mammals, especially seals, walrus, and, until the latter half of the 19th century, whales. Trade with the Russians developed at the end of the 19th century. The Yupik also traded with neighboring reindeer breeders and others. Some enterprising Yupik specialized in trade and used their economic advantage to become village chiefs, with such functions as opening and closing the hunting season, helping to mediate quarrels, and deciding the times for trade journeys. Hunting methods included harpooning from shore or boats, spearing animals in land drives, and, later, the use of guns. Hunting fur-bearing animals, fishing, and collecting plant food were auxiliary activities. Kayaks (one-person, closed skin boats), baidarkas (open, flat-bottomed boats), and whaleboats provided coastal transportation; dog teams and sleds were used on land.

The Yupik practiced shamanism and believed in benign and harmful spirits; the latter caused various misfortunes, especially illness. Certain animals and birds were (and still are) considered sacred and not to be harmed. Rituals, mainly connected with ensuring future success in hunting and with thanksgiving for past hunts, often included dramatic performances and dances. Women generally played an important part in religious rituals.

**“The Siberian Yuits: A Russian People,” Language Connections [56] <https://www.languageconnections.com/the-siberian-yuits-a-russian-people/>**

Overview:

Recently, [Language Connections](https://www.languageconnections.com), a translation and interpreting services agency, had the fortunate opportunity of receiving an inquiry about a language known as Central Alaskan Yup'ik. The client was in need of transcription and translation services to document an ongoing environmental project in Bristol Bay, Alaska. There, many of the local elders were not able to communicate in English.

Until that time, no one at our company had ever heard of the Yupik peoples or languages. A lot of what went into finding qualified Yup'ik language vendors capable of handling this assignment was learning a great deal about the language and

culture ourselves. We soon found that we were not only fascinated by Central Alaskan Yup'ik but all Yupik languages.

#### Current & Relevant Information:

The first differentiation that we found within this language group is in the apostrophe placement in "Yup'ik," but not "Yupik." The apostrophe is added to the name of the Central Alaskan Yup'ik language, indicating a consonant stress elongating the pronunciation of the letter p. However, the name of other Yupik dialects are written without the apostrophe, as is the name of the people that actually speak Yup'ik.

Our research also led us to discover that Yup'ik is the ultimate divergence in a chain of languages that include Siberian Yupik, the Russia-based language and culture from which Central Alaskan Yup'ik initially stems.

The Yuit peoples (singular: "Yuk"), who are also sometimes referred to as the Siberian or Central Siberian Yupik, originate from the far eastern border of the Russian Federation on the Chukchi Peninsula. The Yuit encompass the Naukan, Chaplino and Sirenik Siberian-Eskimo groups, as well as others who were amalgamated within this predominant demographic.

Under the Yuit umbrella, these groups share the Central Siberian Yupik language which is distinguished from Central Alaskan Yup'ik primarily by its pronunciation of elongated consonants, but also by their dissimilar vocabulary. Yupik is the first part of the Eskimo-Aleut language family and can itself be broken down into several different dialects, including Central Siberian Yupik, which form a chain of languages ending in Central Alaskan Yup'ik.

Through any chain of languages it is possible to trace the evolution of linguistic patterns due to the slight differences that occur from dialect to dialect. For example, although Central Alaskan Yup'ik and Central Siberian Yup'ik are mutually unintelligible, standard Central Siberian Yupik and its neighbor dialects, Naukanski Yupik or Chaplanski Yupik are mutually intelligible. Further, Naukanski has more in common with Central Alaskan Yup'ik although they are still not close enough within the chain to be communicable with Central Alaskan Yupik.

Unlike English, Central Siberian Yupik has as many as 27 consonants and only 4 main vowels 'a', 'i', 'u' and ə (schwa), but each of these has a long form ('aa', 'ii', etc.). The language has an iambic stress pattern which means that the stress is put on the second syllable of each two-syllable metrical foot, e.g. every other syllable starting with the second.

The grammatical structure consists of root words which then have suffixes added on to create words with a sentence-like meaning, which in most other languages would require multiple "free" words (though, this is a technique that can also be found in some Eurasian languages, such as German). Within Yupik word structure, the meaning of a word always stems from the left of the word gaining specificity through

the suffixes attached to the right. Moreover, the ordering of these suffixes may be various to signify different meanings.

Verbal structure in Siberian Yupik demands poly-agreement with all subjects and objects, which further affects the attachment of suffixes on the root of a word.

Historically, the Siberian Yupik people have lived an oral culture, passing stories and wisdom down through generations by word of mouth, but without a writing system. In the 1760s, writing was introduced by missionaries working with the Yupik peoples, although, at first most were taught only how to write in Russian.

Soon, however, Russian's Cyrillic script was adapted to Yupik in order to accommodate translation of the Bible and other religious texts into Yupik. Yet, it was not until the beginning of the 19th century with the further arrival of Europeans seeking out resources and industry within the region that Yupik languages truly came to have written forms.

Since the 1860's, when the US purchased Alaska, there has been a movement in motion to replace the Cyrillic script with the Latin alphabet, and although succeeding with Central Alaskan Yup'iks, it has been met with staunch opposition by the Yuit, who view themselves as being more aligned with Russian cultures.

Today, the Yuits continue to partake in many of their historical traditions, their culture of shamanism, amulets and animal folklore, living in traditional yaranga dwellings, and speaking their native Central Siberian Yupik and its many divergent dialects.

It's amazing that they have survived through so much change when other Eskimo-Aleut languages of the far eastern border of the Russian Federation on the Chukchi Peninsula have not, among them the more closely related Central Siberian dialect of Sireniki, for example. This culture, based largely in Russia and which mostly uses Russian's Cyrillic writing system, is more often equated with its Eskimo heritage. In this global world, it is important to understand how smaller civilizations, such as the Yuit, have managed to survive and assimilate within the larger civilizations of which they have come to be a part.

#### Social Issues:

**“American Eskimos: The Yup'ik and Inupiat,” Nurse Key, 29 December 2019 [57]**  
<https://nursekey.com/american-eskimos-the-yupik-and-inupiat/>

#### Overview:

##### **Overview of Alaska: The Land**

Alaska is often described in superlatives. One fifth the size of the continental United States, Alaska has more coastline than the other 49 states combined and is by far the largest state in the continental United States. With a land area of 570,641 square miles, it is more than twice the size of Texas. Everything in Alaska appears to be on

a grand scale. It is the home of the largest mountain in North America, Mount McKinley (also known as Denali, an Athabascan word meaning “The High One”), which rises to a height of 20,320 feet and is joined by six other peaks that are over 14,500 feet high. Alaska is also the home of the Bering Glacier, which, together with the Bagley Oil Field, covers 2000 square miles, an area larger than the state of Delaware. There are more than 100,000 other glaciers in Alaska, only a few of which are named. Across Alaska, large mammals, including bear, moose, and caribou, roam largely undisturbed, providing for the subsistence needs of the Alaska Native population.

The chief influences on the climate in Alaska are its northern latitude, its large landmass, and its coastal waters. In the southern part of Alaska, the warm marine currents cause the climate to be temperate and damp, resulting in spruce rain forests on Kodiak Island and in the southern panhandle of the state. On the Aleutian Islands, where the climate is also temperate, grasses and shrubs predominate.

The interior of Alaska is bordered on the north by the Brooks Range, on the south by the Alaska Range, and on the west by the Arctic environment of the coast. The boreal forests of the interior consist of “relatively small specimens of white and black spruce, alder, birch and aspen [which] cover most of the rolling hills”. The river drainages are marshy and flat and attract many species of waterfowl important to the Athabaskan Indians who live in this area. The temperature in interior Alaska varies dramatically from lows of  $-50^{\circ}\text{F}$  in the winter to more than  $90^{\circ}\text{F}$  in the summer.

A 200-mile-wide band extending along the western coast of Alaska from Bristol Bay to the border of Alaska and Canada is the Arctic region. This area is drained by the Yukon and Kuskokwim rivers and their tributaries. It is in this area that Eskimos live. The Inupiat Eskimos live in the northern section from the Seward Peninsula north to the Canadian border. Yup'ik Eskimos live south of the Seward Peninsula to Bristol Bay in southwestern Alaska, both along the coast and inland along the Yukon and Kuskokwim Rivers. Winters in this area are long, and summers are short and cool.

An unusual feature of Alaska's terrain is permafrost, or permanently frozen ground. In the Arctic region, continuous permafrost underlies surface dirt in depths of about 2000 feet. Some buildings and highways have been erected on permafrost; when the permafrost thaws, those structures sink. More recently, climate change has accelerated permafrost thawing, impacting the stability of infrastructure and ecosystems. Loss of sea ice has negatively impacted several animal species on which Inupiat peoples depend for subsistence, and coastal erosion has forced some villages to relocate for safety reasons.

Over most of the arctic, annual snowfall is quite light, as little as 4 to 6 inches. While actual snowstorms are rare, ground blizzards, which whip up dry snow already on the ground, may persist for days. At cold temperatures, wind speeds the rate of heat loss from the skin, thus increasing the risk of freezing injury.

Alaska has 33,000 miles of coastline. Migratory marine mammals (walrus, seals, and whales), fish (particularly salmon), and birds return to birthing grounds in Alaska during the summer. The Bering Sea, the Yukon and Kuskokwim Rivers and their tributaries, and the migratory bird nesting areas make the hunting and fishing resources an important source of subsistence food for the Alaskan Native population, including the Yup'ik and the Inupiat Eskimos. Limited income-generating opportunities in rural villages make subsistence activities crucial for survival.

For many years the Eskimos claimed that certain lands belonged to them without effect. However, when oil was discovered in the state, the U.S. government recognized the right of Eskimos to their traditional lifestyle. The 1971 Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act (ANCSA) created 12 regional Native corporations and provided for the allocation of land and monies to those corporations and to 200 Native villages. While any Alaska Native who lived in the geographic region of the corporation could become a shareholder, the shareholders of four of the corporations are primarily of Yup'ik or Inupiat ethnic origin; a fifth describes its shareholders as being of Yup'ik, Alutiiq, Aleut, or Athabascan origin.

Eskimos, individually and through their regional corporations, have varied in their responses to resource development proposals. In 2002, when the Bush Administration proposed drilling in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge (ANWR), where the Inupiat Eskimos hold title to 92,000 acres, the Natives sided with the state and labor unions in favor of drilling. Environmentalists have argued that, while other Alaskan oil projects had not harmed the region's polar bears and caribou, ANWR drilling could threaten those species. To date, drilling in ANWR has not occurred. However, the polar bear population in the Beaufort Sea has dropped by nearly 40%, presumably due to reductions in polar sea ice.

In contrast to their response to ANWR drilling proposals, Native groups have been largely united in their opposition to the proposed Pebble Mine, which they have argued would negatively impact important salmon streams in the Bristol Bay region. There continues to be tension as various groups struggle to achieve a balance between income-generating resource development and culturally relevant subsistence activities.

In the former Soviet Union, Eskimo communities near the Bering Strait were moved inland to limit contact with the communities in Alaska. As relationships improved between the United States and the Soviet Union, visits by friends and relatives across the Bering Sea were resumed between 1988 and 1999. However, after a father and son drowned while returning home from Alaska, Russia restricted such trips until 2014, when a group of 12 men traveled in two aluminum skiffs from Provideniya, Russia, to Gambel, Alaska, to visit U.S. relatives for several days. Still, visits between relatives living in Russia and Alaska are infrequent.

## **Overview of the People**

Archeologists believe that the ancestors of the Eskimos came across the Bering Strait from Asia about 30,000 years ago. The results of a genetic study of five populations of Eskimos suggested that at least four separate migrant groups crossed the Bering Strait at various times. For centuries, the native people of Alaska lived in isolated regions and were undisturbed by outside cultures. Archeologists have estimated that 48,000 Eskimos lived along the Arctic region of North America from 1750 to 1800 A.D., with the majority (26,000) living in the area now known as Alaska. Approximately two fifths of these early Alaskans spoke Yup'ik and lived in southwestern Alaska, with the Yukon River as the natural dividing line between this group and the Inupiat, who occupied the more northern coastal areas.

Significant population change occurred with the U.S. purchase of Alaska from Russia in 1867. Beginning in 1883, missionaries began to convert the Alaska Native population to Christianity and introduced limited health services. In the early 1900s, "outsiders" discovered the wealth of Alaska's natural resources, and the long-undisturbed culture of the natives residing in rural areas came face to face with elements of the Western culture brought by Alaska's new occupants. Outsiders also brought infectious diseases, including smallpox, influenza, hepatitis, and measles, to which the native people had no immunity. Epidemics killed thousands of the native people.

The gold rushes in the early 1900s brought miners and their families. In the 1940s and 1950s, military personnel came to Alaska because of its strategic geographical location. Between 1941 and 1945 over \$1 billion was pumped into Alaska by the federal government to develop transportation systems including railroads, highways, airfields, docks, and breakwaters. The most recent influx of westerners arrived after 1968, when a large oil and gas reservoir, estimated to be twice as large as any other oil field in North America, was found on Alaska's north slope. The 800-mile Trans-Alaskan pipeline was completed in 1977 at a cost of \$7.7 billion.

Today, Alaska has a varied population. In 2013, Alaska's population was estimated to be 735,132 (U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, 2011, Census Briefs, 2015). Of those, 67.3% were White, 3.9% were Black, 14.7% were Alaska Native or American Indian, 5.8% were Asian or Pacific Islander, and 6.6% were Hispanic.

Members of the indigenous population are often referred to collectively as Alaska Natives, and when such things as employment rates, educational levels, and disease incidence rates are discussed, the numbers and percentages generally refer to all Native groups (i.e., Indians and Eskimos); thus the poverty rate is known for Alaska Natives in general but not for the Yup'ik and Inupiat subgroups. In fact, the Native population is divided culturally and linguistically into five major groupings: Interior Indians (Athabaskans), Aleuts, Southeast Coastal Indians (Tlingit, Haida, and Tsimshian peoples, which have disparate languages), Northern Eskimos (Inupiat), and Southern Eskimos (Yup'ik). In 2010, Eskimos composed 56.8% of the

Alaska Native population, with those of Yup'ik descent predominating slightly (30,868 compared to 25,687 of Inupiat descent). The median age for all Alaska Natives in 2010 was just 26.7 years, compared to 33.8 years for the state's entire population. This may be partly attributable to a fertility rate of 3 among Alaska Natives compared to a rate of less than 2.5 for non-Natives in Alaska. Although Alaska Natives are a young population, in 2010 their life expectancy at birth was only 70.7 years, compared with 78.1 years for all Alaskans and 78.7 years for all U.S. people.

The seasonally adjusted unemployment rate in Alaska in September 2014 was 6.8% and ranked forty-first in the nation, while the national rate for the same month was 5.9%. Unemployment among Alaska Natives during the first half of 2013 was 11.7%, compared with a rate of 5.5% among white Alaskans. From 2007 through 2013, when the U.S. poverty rate was 14.3%, the rate among Alaska Natives living in Alaska was 21%.

#### Current & Relevant Information:

##### **Social Organization: Family**

The family unit, with its kinship ties, was paramount to survival in the harsh Arctic environment. The survival of the group traditionally was considered more important than the survival of the individual members. Several family units would band together in a migrating social group. These social groups were not permanent because families could disband and join other groups during a lifetime. However, the roles for individuals and for families within a social group were clearly delineated, so that the groups were not weakened by the shifting of members. In fact, this shifting may have strengthened the culture by extending kinships. Extended families consisted of parents, their children (from a current or previous marriage or from adoption), grandparents, and single blood relatives. The husband was the head of the family, but the responsibility of bonding the family into a strong unit belonged to the mother. Thus, if the family was unsuccessful, the blame was placed on the woman. The woman's role for family bonding has continued into the modern cultural adaptation. However, in recent years, some male members of the Eskimo society find themselves at a loss with the diminution of the role of hunter and subsistence gatherer. Inactivity and lack of jobs for men have led to alcoholism and family dysfunction.

The role of Eskimo elders in the family had been one of respect, honor, and inclusion in the family unit. noted that when Eskimo elders are relocated to nursing or assisted living homes, considerable stress on both the family and the elder occurs. They described a Marrulet Eniit (Yup'ik for "Grandmother's house"), which opened in Dillingham, Alaska, in February 2000; the facility has provided a model for other Native-serving assisted living facilities in Alaska.



Kinships were vital social relationships when Eskimos lived in isolated areas. Kinship boundaries extended beyond blood relations through such practices as wife sharing, hunting partnerships, and the adoption of children. The code of behavior between kin was as binding as that between blood relatives. These extensive kinship relationships were partially responsible for the cultural similarities in Eskimos that spread across the vast Arctic regions. History has recorded incidents of lost Eskimo hunters who crossed paths with another Eskimo band and were killed if the lost person could not prove kinship to a member of the new group.

In Eskimo culture today, the extended family plays a very important role. Survival no longer depends on kinships, but these relationships are far from dead. There still is a linking of families, which is evidenced by the sharing of Native foods or the formation of business partnerships. Eskimo villages have multigenerational families living in the same household or in a household in close approximation. Conflict has begun to occur because of the impact of members of the younger generation adopting dominant culture views toward elders instead of maintaining the strong influence of the views of elders in guiding family functioning.

The extended family involves the informal adoption of babies between families. If someone finds it impossible to care for a baby, adoption is an accepted practice. In the past, adoptions were frequently carried out with little or no litigation. Over the past decades, the informal process has been replaced with a more formal process. In addition, the Indian Child Welfare Act strictly limits adoption of Alaska Native babies by non-Natives. An adopted child is fully incorporated into the extended family. Because of close family ties, the child is often related to the adoptive parents.

The rapid entry of the Eskimo into the American cash economy and value system has led to the restructuring of the Eskimo social and economic system. The nurse who interacts with persons from these cultures should recognize that partially accepted Western values may be superimposed over Eskimo values that are still practiced. The new elite class in Eskimo society is based on the ability to earn money without regard for old, established kinships and extended families, and a disregard for and severance of family and kinship ties underlie conflicts that may be found in villages today.

### **Social Status within the Family Structure.**

Formerly, social status was attained by successful hunters who could provide food and skins not only for their own families but also for others. Successful hunters soon were recognized as leaders in the social group by the members. The opinions of successful hunters were given precedence over the opinions of others. A woman's status was secondary to her husband's and was gained through her own skills in keeping her family well fed and clothed. Each family member had an expected role to play. Grandparents were the primary educators of the children and imparted knowledge and skills required for survival. Children learned skills through play

activities that also contributed to family needs, such as finding birds' nests for the eggs or challenging a playmate in picking the most berries.

Some Eskimo parents do not punish or even correct their small children because tradition says that the spirits of a deceased relative guide each youngster. In the Eskimo cultures the spirit of the deceased relative was considered so paramount to the survival of the young child that while a woman was in labor an old woman was brought to the bedside to recite the names of the child's dead relatives. The name that was uttered at the time the child became visible was regarded as the appropriate name, and thereafter that deceased ancestor was believed to become the guardian spirit of the child. Many Eskimos still believe that the essence of a dead relative is found in children born around the time of the death of a relative. For this reason many new babies may have the same name of a recently deceased family member.

For the Eskimo child, praise from parents and grandparents provides a positive learning experience and a strong self-concept. In Eskimo culture undesirable behavior traditionally was ignored, and if the behavior continued, the child was shamed through teasing and ridicule. Social controls within the community followed a similar pattern. There were no rigid rules. If a social standard was broken, it was assumed that the individual had a valid reason for the breach of conduct. Behavior was kept in control through teasing, gossip, and ridicule. If the behavior threatened group survival, the person was ostracized. To be isolated from the group meant certain death because an individual could not survive alone for long in the Arctic. The traditional Eskimo society is an example of a society that bases status on sharing and contributing to the well-being of the group that employs a positive feedback system to control its members.

Traditional Eskimos did not have any formal recognition of puberty. This was in contrast to other primitive societies where formal rituals frequently marked the coming of age. Boys are recognized by a feast at the first kill, which is shared with the family. In traditional Yup'ik Eskimo culture, girls were recognized when they danced with the older women for the first time.

For the nurse to give culturally appropriate nursing care to the client whose cultural makeup encompasses traditional values regarding social status, it is necessary for the nurse to appreciate traditional family roles. In most cases, it is also necessary to involve both nuclear and extended family members in the planning, implementation, and evaluation of nursing care.

**“Alaska indigenous people see culture slipping away as sea ice vanishes,” Oliver Milman, The Guardian, 19 December 2016 [58]**

<https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2016/dec/19/alaska-sea-ice-vanishing-climate-change-indigenous-people>

Overview:

The extreme warmth of 2016 has changed so much for the people of the Arctic that even their language is becoming unmoored from the conditions in which they now live.

The Yupik, an indigenous people of western Alaska, have dozens of words for the vagaries of sea ice, which is not surprising given the crucial role it plays in subsistence hunting and transportation. But researchers have noted that some of these words, such as “tagneghneq” (thick, dark, weathered ice), are becoming obsolete.

After thousands of years of use, words are vanishing as quickly as the ice they describe due to climate change. The native inhabitants are also in peril – there are 31 Alaskan towns and cities at imminent risk from the melting ice and coastal erosion. Many will have to relocate or somehow adapt.

#### Current & Relevant Information:

A solution doesn't appear imminent. The US has no national sea level rise plan, no system to deal with displaced people. Even as the country's first climate change refugees emerge from within its own borders, the issue is very much on the sidelines. The incoming president isn't sure what the fuss is about, vacillating between calling climate change a “hoax” concocted by the Chinese or simply claiming that “nobody really knows” if it exists.

While the politics plays out, wrenching decisions will have to be made.

“Having to move elsewhere is unimaginable,” said Metcalf. “As an elder told me the other day, we are not going anywhere. We've been here for centuries. But we may have to consider it, for the sake of our children and grandchildren.”

**“The Chukchis and Siberian Yupiks of the Russian Far East,” Peter P. Schweitzer and Patty A. Gray, University of Alaska Fairbanks, 2000 [59]**  
[http://mural.maynoothuniversity.ie/1237/1/Gray%26Schweitzer\\_Endang.pdf](http://mural.maynoothuniversity.ie/1237/1/Gray%26Schweitzer_Endang.pdf)

#### Overview:

##### **The Peoples**

The Chukotka Autonomous Region of the Russian Federation is inhabited by several Native and non-Native peoples. The Chukchis and Siberian Yupiks constitute the two most numerous Native groups in the region, while ethnic Russians and Ukrainians dominate among the non-Native population. According to the last census of 1989, there were approx. 15,000 Chukchis and 1,700 Yupiks living within Russia. More than 90% of the Yupiks and most of the Chukchis live within the borders of the Chukotka Autonomous Okrug. Some Chukchis also live in the Sakha Republic to the west and in the Magadan Province to the south.

Historically, significant cultural differences developed between the coastal Chukchis and Yupiks in eastern Chukotka (on the Chukchi Peninsula, roughly coinciding with Providenskii and Chukotskii districts) and the tundra or reindeer Chukchi of western Chukotka. Thus, the similarities among coastal Chukchis and Yupiks were often more pronounced than among coastal and reindeer Chukchis. Commensurate with the ethnographic expertise of the authors, our account will focus on the Yupiks and Chukchis of the Chukchi Peninsula and the Chukchis of the Anadyr River Basin (Anadyrskii District). Nevertheless, the general tendencies described hold true for the entire region of Chukotka. Neither “Chukchi” nor “Siberian Yupik” are self-designations. “Chukchi” has been used by Russians since the 17th century and the origin of the word probably goes back to the Chukchi term for “reindeer”. The label “Siberian Yupik” came only recently into use and partly coincides with the self-designation “Yupigyt”. “Siberian” in this context serves to distinguish them from Yupik groups in Alaska, although the Yupiks of Chukotka do not feel themselves as “Siberians” (Siberia is located further to the west in their view).

Other, smaller, Native groups of Chukotka not specifically discussed in our account include the Chuvans, the Evens, Evenks, Koriaks, and Yukagirs. Most of them have their “home bases” in other regions and/or have moved into Chukotka during the last few centuries. The non-Native population – although sometimes referred to as “Russians” – is of heterogeneous ethnic origin, albeit dominated by Slavic peoples from the European parts of Russia. We will use the term “Incomers” (a rough translation of the Russian word used in Chukotka) in referring to them collectively.

Both Chukchis and Siberian Yupiks have inhabited Chukotka for several thousand years. The Chukchi language shows little dialect differentiation and belongs to the Chukotko-Kamchatkan language family. The Siberian Yupiks are speakers of Eskimo languages (part of Eskimo-Aleut language family) and until recently there were three distinct Yupik languages spoken in Chukotka (currently there are two left). Although several researchers have assumed that the ancestors of the Yupiks preceded the Chukchis in settling the coastal areas of Chukotka, there is not enough evidence to settle the issue definitively. In any case, in the eastern parts of Chukotka, Chukchis and Siberian Yupiks have a long history of cultural exchange and mutual influence.

The Native peoples of Chukotka have had contact with non-Native peoples since the seventeenth century, beginning with the first Russian/Cossack explorers who moved into Chukotka in search of fresh economic opportunities (and who were later followed by American traders with the same goals). The Chukchis gained a fierce reputation during the first half of the 18th century, when they successfully withstood Russian military attempts to subdue them. The eastern parts of Chukotka did not come under full government control until the early 20th century.

The following brief description of Chukchi and Yupik traditional culture refers to the early 20th century (ca. 1900-1925). This period, although far from representing an

“untainted past,” is characterized by largely self-determined subsistence activities for which we have a reasonably good ethnographic record. In subsequent decades, Chukotka became fully incorporated into the Soviet which led to far-reaching transformations to dealt with in later sections.

#### Current & Relevant Information:

The major difference in the social organization of reindeer herders and coastal residents was that among the former there was a more pronounced differentiation into rich and poor. However, rich herders could lose their fortunes quickly through epizoa and other misfortune. Among coastal residents where the harvested resources were distributed more equitably. Economic stratification there developed only in the second half of the 19th century, through contact with commercial whalers and traders.

The settled village was the most important social and political unit for the inhabitants of the coastal areas of the Chukchi Peninsula, while among reindeer herding peoples it was the mobile herding camp. Larger political units (e.g., consisting of several neighboring villages or camps) rarely seem to have been formed acted as corporate and/or unified groups. Larger villages tended to consist of two or more subgroups, which were generally named after their current or previous places of residence. The “whaling crew” – a group made up of relatives and neighbors – was the most important social unit (beyond the extended family) within coastal villages. Among the reindeer herders this unit coincided with the herding camp, which typically consisted of four to five extended families.

In contrast to many other Siberian peoples, neither the Chukchis nor the Siberian Yupiks followed a strict clan organization. The Siberian Yupiks had kin groups which resembled the so-called “clans” of St. Lawrence Island, Alaska. Both linguistic groups had a variety of mechanisms to extend kinship links beyond what Euroamericans call relatives (for example, through “spouse exchange”). Marriages were not initiated by a special wedding ceremony nor the payment of a bride-price, but by a period of bride-service (i.e., the future groom would live and work with the bride’s family for a certain amount of time, after which both spouses typically removed to the husband’s family). There were no particular rules as to marry within or without certain social boundaries, but there was a general tendency to marry within one’s camp or village. Still, marriages between coastal residents and reindeer herders did occur.

Under the clarion call of “economic efficiency,” a number of prominent (mostly Yupik) coastal settlements were forcibly closed in the Soviet period and their residents relocated. As a result, the following decades witnessed a sharp increase in the numbers of suicides and other violent deaths, the extent of alcoholism and other social problems. The rate of non-Native in-migration increased from the 1950s through the 1980s, coinciding with a campaign of industrial development in

Chukotka (construction, mining, oil drilling, etc.). While the total population of Chukotka in 1930 was 14,500 and 96.3% were Natives, by 1970 the population was 100,000, and only 12.8% were Natives. In-migration to Chukotka continued until 1989, when the population peaked at 164,783. As a result of these drastic demographic shifts, local Native residents gradually became a minority in their own settlements, received lower ranking jobs and smaller salaries than the Incomers, and the Russian language became the dominant means of communication in public.

**“Yupik,” Encyclopedia.com, 3 December 2024 [60]**

<https://www.encyclopedia.com/humanities/encyclopedias-almanacs-transcripts-and-maps/yupik>

#### Overview:

Yup'ik (pronounced YOU-pik). The name Yup'ik, or Yupiaq, applies not only to the people but also to the language. It comes from two words—yuk, meaning “person” or “human being,” and pik, meaning “real.” The plural is Yupiit, the “real people.” When Yup'ik is spelled with the apostrophe, it refers only to the Central Alaskan Yup'ik and shows that the “p” sound is long. The Siberian and Naukanski Yupik do not use the apostrophe. The Central Alaskan Yup'ik who live on Nunivak Island call themselves Cup'ig (plural Cup'it). Those who live in the village of Chevak call themselves Cup'ik (plural Cup'it). Their names for themselves also mean “real people.”

The Yup'ik live in western, southwestern, and southcentral Alaska and the Russian Far East. Although the ancestors of the Yupik in Russia may have once inhabited a large territory along the Bering and Arctic Sea coasts, in the early twenty-first century they reside mainly in three small areas—Naukan, Chaplino (Central Siberian Yupik), and Sireniki.

Before the Europeans arrived the estimated population in Nunivak was five hundred; in Yukon-Kuskokwim, thirteen thousand; and in Bristol Bay, three thousand. According to statistics from the U.S. Bureau of the Census, the population count for Yup'ik in 2000 was 21,937. Prior to European contact the Sugpiaq numbered around twenty thousand; afterwards, their numbers fell to less than five thousand. The 2000 census showed 2,355 Sugpiaq. There are about 1,700 Yupik living in Russia in the early twenty-first century.

#### Current & Relevant Information:

##### **Looking toward the future**

In modern times the Yup'ik, along with other native groups, are struggling to balance the many innovations of modern society with traditional culture and values. New technology like snowmobiles, outboard motors, CB radios, and telephones have made life easier, but have also increased pollution and altered the environment.

Other changes have been a result of the [Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act](#) (ANCSA) passed in 1971. Under this act the Natives gave up their rights to any future land claims. The people received 44 million acres and \$962.5 million. The land, however, was divided among nonprofit corporations, and the people were given shares. Although owning land conflicts with Native beliefs, the Yup'ik had to develop skills to run the corporations and follow government rules.

Since then, the people have worked together to improve their community economies. Various Yup'ik village corporations merged to lower their costs. One of the largest groups, Calista Corporation, represents 56 villages, many of them Yup'ik. Originally the group lost a great deal of money, but they have since turned the corporation into a profitable venture.

So many rapid changes in such a short time have resulted in many social problems among Alaskan Natives. Alcoholism, suicide, and domestic violence are problems many Native communities face.

### **Current tribal issues**

The biggest difficulties the Yup'ik face is the erosion of their culture. Although modernization has benefited them, they have also suffered many losses to their traditions. Sometimes it is difficult to strike a balance between the old and new. Perhaps Paapi Merlin Koonoka, an elder from St. Lawrence Island, quoted in James H. Barker's book, *Always Getting Ready*, expressed it best: "And as I see it now, it is important for our children to get a modern education. By doing that they will be in a stronger position to preserve our culture and tradition."

**"The end of "Eskimo land": Yupik relocation in Chukotka, 1958-1959," Igor Krupnik and Mikhail Chlenov, *Études/Inuit/Studies*, 2007 [61]**  
<https://www.erudit.org/fr/revues/etudinit/2007-v31-n1-2-etudinit2570/019715ar/>

#### Abstract:

Fifty years ago, in summer 1958, Russian authorities started a program of massive relocation of the Yupik population on the Chukchi Peninsula, Siberia. About 800 people, or roughly 70% of the small nation of 1,100 at that time, were forced to leave their home sites and were moved to other communities. Some basic facts related to the Yupik relocations of the 1950s have been known since the 1960s; but no first-hand narratives of the displaced people were ever published. The paper overviews the closing of the three largest Siberian Yupik communities of Naukan, Ungaziq (Chaplino) and Plover in 1958-1959, and the displacement of their residents as recalled from their memories and personal accounts collected by the authors during the 1970s and 1980s. The paper argues that Soviet Yupik relocations of the 1950s were unprecedented in their scale and traumatic impact, even when compared to other state-initiated resettlement programs that targeted many Inuit communities in Alaska, Canada and Greenland.



## Current & Relevant Information:

### **Introduction**

This paper is a somber contribution to a forgotten anniversary. Fifty years ago, in summer 1958, the Soviet authorities launched a program of massive relocation of the Yupik (Asiatic, or Siberian Eskimo) population of the Chukchi Peninsula, Siberia. Age-old Native villages were officially “closed”; family homes were hastily abandoned; and most of the people’s property and personal belongings were left behind. Altogether, about 800 people were forced to leave their original sites and were moved to other communities in two years. Over the next five decades people subjected to relocations, their children, even grandchildren had to cope with the memories of the life once shattered and with the threats of further resettlements ever to follow.

Of course, the Yupik people in Chukotka were not the only Indigenous Arctic residents to be moved (or, rather, displaced) by the state. Other Arctic powers—U.S., Canada, Denmark, Norway—were also engaged in various resettlement/relocation activities at that very time. Nor was the program of the Yupik relocations somewhat exceptional in Russia’s recent history. In the 1930s and 1940s, millions of Soviet citizens had been moved around the country as deportees, political convicts, and forced laborer, including many large ethnic groups (like the Chechen, Volga Germans, Kalmyk, and other) that were uprooted from their native areas and exiled during and after World War II. In fact, Yupik relocations in the 1950s proceeded with no reported violence and have been undertaken under rather benign premises of economic modernization, better housing, and services for Indigenous people. Nevertheless, they ended up in the destruction of the Yupik system of residence and community social network, as it had existed since the early contact era and up to the mid-20th century.

The full story of the Yupik relocations in the 1950s was never publicly disclosed by the Soviet/Russian sources. Although the closing of the Yupik communities—and of dozens of other Indigenous villages across the Russian North—was well known to the locals, it was quickly veiled in secrecy. No accounts of the relocations and their social consequences were allowed to be published in Russia, except for a few references to the very fact that people were displaced from their native sites (Krupnik and Chlenov 1979: 27; Leont’iev 1973: 32; Menovshchikov 1959: 124). Western anthropologists were aware of the basic facts related to the Yupik relocations since the 1970s (Chichlo 1981; Hughes 1984; Krauss 1973, 1974, 1994). Nonetheless, no first-hand reports were available and the lack of proper documentation has long been lamented (Schweitzer 1997: 402).

When we first visited Chukotka in 1971, the memories of the relocations were very much alive and quite painful. During our fieldwork in the 1970s and 1980s, we were able to collect many first-hand narratives that are cited below. All of the people we

interviewed have since passed away (see “Acknowledgements” section). There are, perhaps, a few dozen survivors with a personal memory of the events, who were young people or teens in the 1950s. All of them should be over 60 years of age or more. Their numbers, as well as the overall body of memories about the former Yupik life prior to relocations are rapidly shrinking (Krupnik and Mikhailova 2006: 104-107). Recently, the documentation of Indigenous relocations in the Arctic through people’s narratives on the events received new momentum (e.g., Csonka 1995; Kohlhoff 1995; Marcus 1992, 1995; Tester and Kulchyski 1994), including a new international study (Klein et al. 2008). Our paper is a contribution to this broad effort. It presents the story of the closing of the three largest Siberian Yupik communities of Naukan, Ungaziq (Chaplino) and Plover in 1958-1959, as seen via memoirs and first-hand accounts of its former residents. We hope that such personal recollections, accompanied by the authors’ comments, will be of value to today’s researchers who, otherwise, may not have insight on the events of half a century ago.

**“Indigenous peoples of the Russian North,” Winfried K. Dallmann, Norwegian Polar Institute [62] [https://ansipra.npolar.no/english/items/Russ\\_north.html](https://ansipra.npolar.no/english/items/Russ_north.html)**

#### Overview:

"Rossiyskiy Sever", the Russian North, extends across a distance of 6000 km from the Finnish and Norwegian boundary through the Urals and Siberia to the Bering Strait and the Pacific Ocean. It covers vast areas of taiga (boreal forests), tundra (treeless swamps and pasture lands), and polar deserts. The north-south extension of this belt widens from about 1000 km in Europe to about 3000 km in central Siberia and the Russian Far East.

Approximately 20 million people live in this land, mainly concentrated in towns and settlements along the rivers and in the industrial centers. Only about 180,000 of them belong to approximately 30 small-numbered, aboriginal groups - the indigenous peoples of the North. Their majority live in small villages close to their subsistence areas, where they pursue traditional occupations like reindeer-herding, hunting and fishing. But the reality these people face today is anything but an idyllic carryover from the past.

Since the colonization of the North, large expanses have gradually been converted into areas for alien settlement, transportation routes, industry, forestry, mining and oil production, and have been devastated by pollution, irresponsibly managed oil and mineral prospecting, and military activity.

In tandem with the environmental disaster went the social decay of the indigenous societies since the early Soviet era, with collectivization of subsistence activities, forced relocations, spiritual oppression, and destruction of traditional social patterns and values. The result was the well-known minority syndrome marked by loss of ethnic identity, unemployment, alcoholism, diseases, etc.

The recent socio-economic crises of Russia which came along with the transition to a market economy, has led to a break-down of most of the supply and transportation system in remote areas of the North. Having been incorporated into the alien Soviet economic system, made dependent on modern infrastructure and product distribution, the people now find themselves left alone without supplies, medical care, rising mortality, and the economic means and sufficient legal expertise to deal with the situation. The desperate road back to the old ways of life has tempted many, but is often hampered by the degradation or destruction of the natural environment.

Against this horrendous background, the cultural survival of these small ethnic groups may seem almost impossible. But they fight tenaciously, showing an unbelievable endurance, and their case has already won ground in many national and international fora.

#### Current & Relevant Information:

Like everywhere on earth, the Russian North has been subject to migration of peoples all through human history. Until ca. 2000 years ago, the North was dominated by ancient Siberian tribes whose cultural relations are poorly known. Pressure from the extension of southerly adjacent peoples gradually drove these tribes to the north, at the same time as they mingled with - and were partly assimilated into - the newcomers.

One group of descendants of these ancient Siberian tribes is comprised of the Yupik (eastern Eskimo branch) and Aleuts, who mostly migrated to Alaska and form a common culture group with other North American peoples. In Russia, less than 2000 Yupik live in villages at the Bering Strait, and some 700 Aleuts on the Komandorsk Islands and in Kamchatka.

#### G. Evens [Russia]:

**“Evens,” Encyclopedia.com, 3 December 2024 [63]**

<https://www.encyclopedia.com/humanities/encyclopedias-almanacs-transcripts-and-maps/evens>

#### Overview:

The Evens are an indigenous people of Northeastern Siberia. Most Evens are nomadic hunters and reindeer herders, but some Evens along the coast of the Sea of Okhotsk also engage in fishing and seal hunting. They are closely related in language, culture, and physical type to the Evenki. The Evens' name for themselves is Even (plural Evesel); the origin of this term is obscure. (Some Western scholars write Even as Ewen.) The Evens who dwell on northern Kamchatka and along the northernmost coastline of the Sea of Okhotsk also refer to themselves as the Oroch (plural Orochel) from oroch (reindeer). The adjective Mene, which means "settled," is sometimes used by the non-nomadic fishermen of the Sea of Okhotsk coast. (A

different Tungusic-speaking people of the Amur River region—not to be confused with the Evens—also uses the self-appellation Oroch.) Some Evens also identify themselves by the names of their clans or tribes (Huldacha, Dutki, Kukuin, etc.). In older Russian and Western ethnographic literature, the Evens who occupied what is now northern Yakutia and Magadan Region (Russian oblast) were called Lamut: this term is of Evenki origin and is derived from lamu (sea). The remaining Evens were not differentiated from the Evenki in ethnographic writing until the Soviet period (when the anthropological and linguistic study of the peoples of Siberia greatly developed) and, like the Evenki, were called Tungus (from Tongus, the Yakut word for Evenki).

Although there is much that is uncertain in the origins of the Evens, it is clear that the Evens were formed over many centuries from Tungusic-speaking tribes that mixed with other native peoples of Siberia (particularly the Yukagir and Yakut) as they migrated through the taiga and tundra of Eastern and Northeastern Siberia. Russian Cossacks and explorers began to move into Even territory in the first half of the 17th century. The Evens put up a fierce resistance and frequently attacked and burned Russian forts. Nevertheless, Russia succeeded in subduing them by 1700. Thereafter, the Evens were required to pay the *yasak* (tax in furs). The Russian government's use of Evens as agents to collect the *yasak* from neighboring Chukchi, Koriak, and Yukagirs facilitated the Evens' expansion onto land previously settled by these peoples.

Russian contact brought diseases such as smallpox, mumps, [chicken pox](#), and influenza, to which the Evens had no immunity. This, coupled with the loss of lands to Russian settlers, a decline in the animal population (caused by overhunting in order to pay the *yasak*), the rise of alcoholism, and economic exploitation by Russian officials and merchants, led to a reduction of the Evens' numbers and a steep decline in their [standard of living](#). After the [October Revolution](#), the Communist government attempted to shield the Evens and other northern groups from the negative effects of Russian contact. This effort was influenced by Russian anthropologists who specialized in the study of the Siberian peoples and idealistic Bolsheviks who shared the anthropologists' concern. To aid them in developing economically and culturally within the framework of their own traditions, 10 Even National Districts (Russian *raion*) and one National Region (*krai*) were established in northern Yakutia and on the shores of the Sea of Okhotsk. Taxes on the Evens were reduced, and Even debts to traders were canceled. State-run trading posts that offered fair prices for Even furs were established, and education and Western medical care began to be provided in at least some Even areas. This relatively humanitarian approach to ruling the Evens was abruptly abandoned upon Stalin's rise to power by the end of the 1920s. During the 1930s, Even hunters, fishermen, and reindeer herders were forced into collectives as part of the collectivization of agriculture. At the same time, Stalin's campaign to speedily raise Soviet industry to Western levels brought an enormous number of Russian miners and loggers into

Even territory, particularly after the discovery of gold deposits in 1931 and 1932. The proportion of Evens in the population of the Even national areas dropped from 80% to 40%. The eastward evacuation of Soviet industry away from the front during [World War II](#), and the further growth of extractive industries after the war, continued the ecological damage begun in the 1930s. Moreover, increasing official pressure against Even culture (particularly the Even language) from the Stalin years on placed the Evens' survival as a people in jeopardy. Like the other Siberian peoples, the Evens were powerless to criticize policies harmful to their economy and culture until the Gorbachev era.

#### Current & Relevant Information:

According to the 2002 Russian census the Evens number 19,071, all of whom live in the Russian Federation. Although they do not form a compact mass and their settlements are located in areas in which members of other nationalities (mainly Russians and Yakuts) form a majority, they are scattered over a very wide territory—almost 3 million square kilometers (1,864,200 square miles). There are 8,700 Evens in the northernmost reaches of the Sakha (Yakut) Republic, particularly its Sarkyryrskii, Ust'-Yanskii, Oimiakonskii, Nizhne-Kolymskii, Sredne-Kolymskii, Verkhne-Kolymskii, Tomponskii, Momskii, Allaikhovskii, and Verkhoianskii districts (Russian raion); 1,900 in the Okhotskii and Verkhne-Bureinskii Districts of Khabarovsk Territory (Russian krai); 1,300 in the Chukchi Autonomous District (Russian okrug); 3,800 in the Ol'skii, Severo-Evenskii, and Sredne-Kanskii Districts of Magadan Region (Russian oblast); and 1,500 in the Bystrinskii District and Koriak Autonomous District of Kamchatka Region.

The climate of the Even lands is generally harsh and cold. In northern areas of Even settlement such as the Indigirka River valley, winters last up to nine or ten months, and average annual temperatures do not exceed  $-13.5^{\circ}\text{C}$  ( $7.7^{\circ}\text{F}$ ). Even territory is characterized by mountainous taiga forests of cedar, fir, pine, larch, birch, and spruce, and in the northernmost regions, barren or sparsely forested tundra. Reindeer, mountain sheep, squirrel, bear, elk, sable, fox, wolves, ducks, geese, and grouse are the most common animals. Grayling, cod, loach, and freshwater salmon are found in the rivers and streams of the Even lands, and saltwater salmon and seals inhabit the coastal waters of the Sea of Okhotsk.

**“Even People,” Britannica, 9 November 2016 [\[64\]](#)**

<https://www.britannica.com/topic/Even>

#### Overview:

Even, also spelled Evens, also called Lamut, northern Siberian people (12,000 according to the 1979 Soviet census) closely related to the Evenk (q.v.) in origin, language, and culture. They inhabit the territory to the north and northeast of the Evenki Autonomous Okrug, where they have influenced and have in turn been influenced by their neighbors. The Even who settled on Kamchatka learned and

practiced Chukchi traits; those who mixed with the Yukaghirs created an Even-Yukaghir population that is bilingual. Other peoples related by similar ties include the Dolgan, who are a nomadic reindeer-breeding group, and the riverine Negidals, who are primarily fishermen and hunters.

**“The Indigenous People of Kamchatka,”** vulkaner.no [65]  
<http://www.vulkaner.no/t/kamchat/people.html>

Overview:

Archeological evidence shows that people have been living on southern Kamchatka as long as most indigenous people anywhere else, that is for some thousand years.

For an economy based on hunting and gathering, Kamchatka was rather densely inhabited.

Small communities dotted the coasts and river valleys; many of them were not more than a day's walk from one another.

Current & Relevant Information:

The Evens and Evenky (tunguses) are similar by culture. The Evens ancestors having come to Kamchatka changed their traditional occupation hunting for reindeer breeding. Russians arriving to Kamchatka called the Evens roaming from place to place along the Okhotsk seaside "Iamuts", it means "living by the sea". Herdsmen they called "orochoi", it means "reindeer men". Beside reindeer breeding and hunting the coastal Evens caught fish and hunted marine animals. For fishing they made different kinds of dams and traps. Blacksmith's work was very popular with the Evens.

**“The Oppression of Russia’s Indigenous People,”** Beyond the western Gaze, 15 July 2020 [66] <https://beyondthewesterngaze.com/2020/07/15/the-oppression-of-russias-indigenous-people/>

Overview:

The Evens are mostly nomadic hunters, or reindeer herders; on the coast, some are seal hunters or fishers. They speak the Even language as opposed to Russian, and are visibly distinguishable from ethnic Russians. Soviet-era Russia enforced change upon the Evens. The Russians created a written language for the Evens and eliminated illiteracy. For Evens and other Siberian Natives, the Soviet years altered their existence. ‘Sovietization’ was implemented due to incompatibilities between tribal life and Soviet ideals. Such ideals included a rejection of shamanism – a condemnation that failed to find roots in the indigenous culture due to the lack of an alternative presented by the Russians. However, the decline of shamanism due to negative perceptions of such practices indicates the success of Sovietization in this respect. Education became mandatory in the hopes of encouraging adoption of a Soviet lifestyle to usurp traditional practices and values. For instance, the Soviets

offered reindeer breeders a return to their previous semi-nomadic lifestyle if they sent their children to boarding school for 8 years at a collective center, where Russian was taught as the predominant language. A 1950s and 60s resettlement program forced far-out families to relocate to be closer to the collective center, where they no longer had land and were thus required to participate in Soviet jobs. Therefore, throughout the Soviet era, indigenous people including but certainly not limited to the Even people, suffered a cultural dissolution at the hands of the Soviets.

#### Current & Relevant Information:

Indigenous people are disadvantaged in comparison to ethnic Russians. In 2007, Russia abstained from voting for the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. Legally, indigenous people are not protected in Russia. The umbrella organization for protecting indigenous rights in the country (RAIPON) is state-controlled. Given their reluctance to legally enshrine indigenous rights in the UN, it is easy to imagine the Russian state's treatment towards Natives which is presumably manifested in the actions and policies of RAIPON. Evidence of this is found in the formal classifications of indigenous peoples in the state – of 180 different peoples in the Russian territory, only 40 are officially recognized. Such disdain for indigenous people in the country permeates society. Socioeconomically, crises are experienced to a greater extent by the minorities of Northern Russia, Siberia and the Far East, who are indigenous, than other minorities in the country. Traditional indigenous trades, such as hunting or reindeer breeding, are either in crisis or have disappeared, likely due to modernization.

The Russian arrival at and consequent settlement in Siberia impacted indigenous peoples to a significant degree. Integration of the indigenous people, who had a different culture, spiritual beliefs and behaviors to Russians, posed a challenge. The solution proposed was 'yasak': a symbolic payment made by the indigenous people to Russia to evidence their Russian citizenship and obedience to the state. The main goods used to pay this fee were tusks found in mammoth remains or walruses, skins and furs, and other luxury goods. In other words, yasak was payment made to their invaders in order to continue living land they already inhabited. It is necessary to acknowledge another unsurprising, yet nonetheless offensive, injustice against the Natives of the Russian territory – their land and resource rights. Legislation referring to this issue was revoked in 2015. The consequence of this revocation is the erosion of local authorities' legally protected ability to protect indigenous land from resource users and businesses looking to use the land for their own benefit. A number of violations occurred in 2015 and 2016 following this legislative change. Similarly, in 2017, the reduction in indigenous trade was further threatened when legislation was passed that increased the level of difficulty experienced by indigenous people in applying for fishing applications. In the Pacific region of the country, fishing is a large industry. The new laws require indigenous people to follow a long application process before they can fish – the timing, location, and amount of which they must



accept. Evidently, Russia is keen to limit the rights and freedoms of indigenous peoples, whose land they settled on.

Unfortunately, this year's oil spill in the Russian Arctic will further the disproportionate hardship experienced by Russian Natives. The spill, which began on 29th May, has polluted a large lake near Norilsk – Russia's most polluted city. Over 21,000 tons of oil have entered the Ambarnaya river and surrounding soil, following a storage tank collapse attributed to melting permafrost, a consequence of climate change. The disaster will especially impact indigenous people as the Taimyr Dolgano-Nenetsky District around Norilsk is home to many groups of Natives, who, as previously noted, engage in (and depend on) herding, fishing, and hunting as part of their lifestyle. Though, as previously noted, these practices have declined somewhat, they are still important to indigenous people, and will be dangerously affected by the ecosystem damage that will inevitably occur following the oil spill. The Russian state has little regard for this, having built Nor Nickel's smelting facilities on indigenous land, over 80 years ago. Thus, it is improbable that the government will attempt to mitigate or amend the inevitable problems of May's environmental catastrophe on behalf of the indigenous people it will affect.

#### Social Issues:

**“Evens,” Encyclopedia.com, 3 December 2024 [67]**

<https://www.encyclopedia.com/humanities/encyclopedias-almanacs-transcripts-and-maps/evens>

#### Overview:

The Evens are an indigenous people of Northeastern Siberia. Most Evens are nomadic hunters and reindeer herders, but some Evens along the coast of the Sea of Okhotsk also engage in fishing and seal hunting. They are closely related in language, culture, and physical type to the Evenki. The Evens' name for themselves is Even (plural Evesel); the origin of this term is obscure. (Some Western scholars write Even as Ewen.) The Evens who dwell on northern Kamchatka and along the northernmost coastline of the Sea of Okhotsk also refer to themselves as the Oroch (plural Orochel) from oroch (reindeer). The adjective Mene, which means "settled," is sometimes used by the non-nomadic fishermen of the Sea of Okhotsk coast. (A different Tungusic-speaking people of the Amur River region—not to be confused with the Evens—also uses the self-appellation Oroch.) Some Evens also identify themselves by the names of their clans or tribes (Huldacha, Dutki, Kukuin, etc.). In older Russian and Western ethnographic literature, the Evens who occupied what is now northern Yakutia and Magadan Region (Russian oblast) were called Lamut: this term is of Evenki origin and is derived from lamu (sea). The remaining Evens were not differentiated from the Evenki in ethnographic writing until the Soviet period (when the anthropological and linguistic study of the peoples of Siberia greatly

developed) and, like the Evenki, were called Tungus (from Tongus, the Yakut word for Evenki).

Although there is much that is uncertain in the origins of the Evens, it is clear that the Evens were formed over many centuries from Tungusic-speaking tribes that mixed with other native peoples of Siberia (particularly the Yukagir and Yakut) as they migrated through the taiga and tundra of Eastern and Northeastern Siberia. Russian Cossacks and explorers began to move into Even territory in the first half of the 17th century. The Evens put up a fierce resistance and frequently attacked and burned Russian forts. Nevertheless, Russia succeeded in subduing them by 1700.

Thereafter, the Evens were required to pay the *yasak* (tax in furs). The Russian government's use of Evens as agents to collect the *yasak* from neighboring Chukchi, Koriak, and Yukagirs facilitated the Evens' expansion onto land previously settled by these peoples.

Russian contact brought diseases such as smallpox, mumps, chicken pox, and influenza, to which the Evens had no immunity. This, coupled with the loss of lands to Russian settlers, a decline in the animal population (caused by overhunting in order to pay the *yasak*), the rise of alcoholism, and economic exploitation by Russian officials and merchants, led to a reduction of the Evens' numbers and a steep decline in their standard of living. After the October Revolution, the Communist government attempted to shield the Evens and other northern groups from the negative effects of Russian contact. This effort was influenced by Russian anthropologists who specialized in the study of the Siberian peoples and idealistic Bolsheviks who shared the anthropologists' concern. To aid them in developing economically and culturally within the framework of their own traditions, 10 Even National Districts (Russian *raion*) and one National Region (*krai*) were established in northern Yakutia and on the shores of the Sea of Okhotsk. Taxes on the Evens were reduced, and Even debts to traders were canceled. State-run trading posts that offered fair prices for Even furs were established, and education and Western medical care began to be provided in at least some Even areas. This relatively humanitarian approach to ruling the Evens was abruptly abandoned upon Stalin's rise to power by the end of the 1920s. During the 1930s, Even hunters, fishermen, and reindeer herders were forced into collectives as part of the collectivization of agriculture. At the same time, Stalin's campaign to speedily raise Soviet industry to Western levels brought an enormous number of Russian miners and loggers into Even territory, particularly after the discovery of gold deposits in 1931 and 1932. The proportion of Evens in the population of the Even national areas dropped from 80% to 40%. The eastward evacuation of Soviet industry away from the front during World War II, and the further growth of extractive industries after the war, continued the ecological damage begun in the 1930s. Moreover, increasing official pressure against Even culture (particularly the Even language) from the Stalin years on placed the Evens' survival as a people in jeopardy. Like the other Siberian peoples,

the Evens were powerless to criticize policies harmful to their economy and culture until the Gorbachev era.

#### Current & Relevant Information:

##### **Social Problems**

Contemporary Evens share a number of social problems with other peoples of Siberia: a low life expectancy due to inadequate medical care, alcoholism, and respiratory diseases; widespread poverty; the degradation of their native region's environment; the prejudices of local Russians (and even some Yakuts, who consider the Evens "primitive"); and the threat to their cultural survival posed by Soviet-era policies aimed at eliminating "backward" non-Russian cultures. Representatives of the Evens are active in the Association of the Small Peoples of the North and other native-rights organizations, where they voice their concerns over these issues and fight government plans (for example, for the construction of dams and electric plants in ecologically fragile areas) that, if implemented, would damage their ancestral lands even further.

The Evens of the Sakha (Yakut) Republic have fared better than their compatriots in other administrative regions in recent attempts to gain official support for their cultural and economic needs. Because the Sakha are themselves an indigenous Siberian people who have faced both attacks by officialdom on their culture and way of life and damage to their native environment by extractive industries, their political leaders are particularly sensitive to the problems of native Siberians in general. For example, the Sakha government has founded an Institute of the Problems of the Northern Minorities for the study, preservation, and teaching of the languages, arts, folklore, and history of the Evens and other native groups—that is, Yukagirs, Chukchi, Evenki, and Dolgans—who dwell in the northern reaches of the Sakha Republic. Moreover, in 1989 the Sakha administration established the Even-Bytantaisk District (Russian raion)—the first autonomous Even area since its predecessors were abolished in the 1930s.

**“Indigenous Peoples of Northern Russia: Anthropology and Health,” Andrew Kozlov, Galina Vershubsky, and Maria Kozlova, *International Journal of Circumpolar Health*, 2007 [68]**

<https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/22423982.2007.11864604B>

#### Overview:

It has become a tradition for modern public health services to rely on using normal standards that are based on the anatomical, physiological and biochemical parameters of an average “Reference Man.” However, in populations whose medical and biological characteristics obviously differ from the average person, these conventional norms frequently fail to distinguish between “the healthy” and “the sick.” The peoples of the Far North, continental Siberia and the Far East of the Russian

Federation (RF) — all in all more than one million individuals — belong to such medically specific groups. The formation of an anthropological specificity of the indigenous population of the high-latitude areas in Russia was a process that took many centuries. The biological adaptation to the conditions of subarctic, continental and monsoonal environments led to the formation of specific adaptive complexes. By their morphological, physiological, biochemical and endocrinological characteristics, the representatives of corresponding populations differ not only from the natives of the temperate climatic zone but also from one another.

In terms of social ethnography, the indigenous peoples of the Russian Federation's Far North (hereafter referred to as the RF North) are ethnic minorities surrounded by considerably larger ethnic groups. Some of the northern peoples number just a few hundred, while the populations of larger groups number in the tens of thousands. Naturally, the intensity and, quite often, the direction of population-genetic and social processes in such numerically different groups also differ.

Some of the populations in our study (Mansi of the Sosva, Komi-Izhems, Northern Khanty and Nenets) represent more or less distinct isolates. Their "isolation" is supported by their cultural originality, as well as by the presence of some geographical barriers hampering active penetration by other ethnic groups into their territories. These barriers include long distances between national settlements and larger populated areas, lack of roads and so on. As the geographical isolation of small ethnic groups decreases (as in the case of the Nanais of the Sikachi-Aljan and Troitskoye villages of Khabarovsk Kray, or the Saami and Komilzhems of the Lovozero village of Murmansk Oblast in our research), the degree of their cultural and genetic assimilation grows.

An important characteristic of cultural assimilation is the degree to which "modernization" is affecting their life-style. The pressure of sociocultural stress accompanying this "westernization" appears to be very painful for the native northerners. Besides regulating the interrelations of community members, the social arrangement of traditional Arctic communities also creates an optimal balance with the environment. Therefore, the human infringements on the Arctic's natural environment in the "new industrial development areas" result not only in eco-catastrophes but also in social reorganization.

Today, the nomadic and semi-nomadic groups still maintain a way of life that is close to tradition and is based on reindeer herding, hunting and fishing; and the same is true for the populations of the outermost "national" or "ethnic settlements" (in our research these are the Khanty, Mansi, Nenets and Komilzhems of Western Siberia). The life-style of the same ethnic groups constantly residing in relatively large settlements, however, is becoming quickly "westernized," even though an appreciable part of its "northern specificity" remains. Urbanization that naturally included the northern regions of Russia (by 2002, the share of urban population

among the 26 numerically small peoples of the RF North reached 28%), is radically changing the northerners' way of life and world outlook.

Our study takes in varied ethnic, geographical and social groups of native northerners of different ages — from newborns to middle-aged and elderly people. Together with the data of other researchers, these materials will give the reader an idea of the medical and biological specificity of the indigenous peoples of northern Russia.

#### Current & Relevant Information:

##### **Defining the Russian North**

The Russian North (Sever) stretches across the Eurasian landmass. The European North of the country extends from the Kola Peninsula to the Ural Mountains.

“Siberia” (Sibir) as a geographical term is generally used to refer to all of Russia east of the Urals and sometimes, in a more restricted sense, excludes the Far East. In this book, the focus is generally on those parts of Russia located above the 60° N latitude, but the formal definition of the “North” in Russia can be problematic.

Decision No. 1029 of the USSR Council of Ministers adopted in 1967, and a number of statutory acts that followed, defined the “Far North districts and equivalents” in terms of awarding residents certain special privileges such as higher wages, longer duration of paid vacation, and so on. There are anomalies under this concept of the Far North. For example, the whole Khanty-Mansi AO has the status of “the equivalent of Far North,” while only three rayons of the Komi-Permyak AO have the same status, even though the whole Komi-Permyak AO lies almost on the same latitude on the other (European) side of the Urals.

**Table I.** Linguistic affiliation, official and other names, and population of 26 indigenous numerically small peoples of the North, Siberia, and the Far East of Russian Federation.

Language family/branch	Official name of ethnic group	Other names	Population in RF (based on 2002 Census)
<b>Altaic</b>			
Tungu	Evenks	Tungus	35,527
	Evens	Lamuts	19,071
	Nanais	Golds	12,160
	Negidals		567
	Oroki	Ulta	346
	Orochi		686
	Udege	Kekar	1,657
	Ulchi	Mangus	2,913
Turkic	Dolgans		7,261
	Tofalars	Karagas	837
<b>Uralic</b>			
Samoyed	Enets	Yenisey-Samoyeds	237
	Nenets	Yurak-Samoyeds	41,302
	Nganasans	Tavgi-Samoyeds	834
	Selkups	Yenisey-Ostyaks	4,249
Finnic	Saami	Lopars	1,991
Ugric	Khanty	Ostyaks	28,678
	Mansi	Voguls	11,432
<b>Chukotko-Kamchatkan (Paleoasiatic)</b>			
Northern	Chukchi	Lauravetlans	15,767
	Koryaks		8,743
Southern	Itelmens		3,180
<b>Eskimo-Aleut</b>			
Eskimos	Siberian Yupik		1,750
	Aleuts	Unangan	540
<b>Language isolates</b>			
	Kets		1,513
	Yukagirs	Omoks	1,509
	Chuvans		1,087
	Nivkhi	Gilyaks	5,162

According to the 1996 federal law, On the Bases of State Regulation of Social and Economic Development of the North of the Russian Federation, the indigenous, numerically small peoples (korennyye malochislennyye narody) of the North, Siberia and the Far East are those “living on the territories of traditional residence of their ancestors, adhering to their original way of life, and believing themselves to be independent ethnic entities; their total number in Russia is less than 50 thousand people.” Between 1926 and 1993, this group included 26 peoples of various origins and languages (see Table I). As the names of peoples have changed repeatedly, Table I identifies both the modern and the most widespread old names that readers

may come across in various publications. Numerically small peoples living in the Far East (Orochi, Oroki, Nanais, Negidals, Nivkhi, Udege and Ulchi) are often united in the group of “peoples of Amur and Sakhalin.”

Since 1993 the list has expanded considerably. By 2000, 40 groups had been recognized and they were included in the 2002 Census. Many among the 14 new groups are resident in the southern parts of Siberia; some have been united with other groups. In 2005, the forty-first group, the Izhma Komi (or Komi-Izhems; population 15,607) in the northern Komi Republic, Kola Peninsula, and Western Siberia, was accorded this status.

According to the 2002 census, the total number of people in the original 26 ethnic groups mentioned above was 212,489 individuals, whereas the sum of all 40 numerically small peoples of the North, the Far East and Siberia totaled 279,794.

It is impossible to evaluate changes in the population size and other demographic parameters of the newly included peoples (before 2002, censuses did not record if individuals affiliated themselves with them). Therefore, in this book we analyze only the demographic data of groups listed in Table I.

There are also ethnic groups residing in the North who are considered neither indigenous nor numerically small (i.e., <50,000) but are nevertheless ethnic minorities within Russia. They are the Komi (the total number in Russia is 293,406 people; the share of Komi in the Komi Republic population is 25.2%), Komi-Permyaks (125,235 or 59% of the Komi-Permyak AO population), Yakuts (443,852 in Russia, 45.5% of the Sakha-Yakut Republic population) and Buryats (445,175 people or 27.8% of the Buryat Republic population). The representatives of these groups are also included in our analysis.

**“The History of Reindeer Herding and the Eveny People,” Selena Hoy, Discover: Silversea, 21 February 2019 [69] <https://discover.silversea.com/destinations/russian-far-east/eveny-people-russian-far-east/>**

#### Overview:

In the beginning, there was only the sea. One day, a maiden came down from heaven to the water. She was riding on an eight-legged reindeer, and tufts of reindeer fur that scattered on the surface of the sea became a raft. The reindeer gave their body to become earth, mountains and forests. The lice from their fur became wild reindeer roaming the landscape. The reindeer’s heart became a hero, and their lungs became a boy and a girl. So says one Eveny legend, recounted by Semyon Egorovich Dyachkov and recorded by professor Vasily Afanasievich Robbeck in 1978.

#### Current & Relevant Information:

**An indispensable resource**



Reindeer are vital to the survival of the Eveny, or Even (singular), people — an indigenous ethnic minority living in northeastern Siberia and the [Russian Far East](#). There are about 20,000 Eveny, and they are close cousins of the more well-known and numerous Evenki people. Both are part of the Tungus group of people and languages, according to the 2015 paper “Casting Timeshadows” by anthropologists Piers Vitebsky and Anatoly Alekseyev. Vitebsky studied and lived with the Eveny for more than 20 years, and Alekseyev is an Eveny reindeer herder turned anthropologist.

The region inhabited by the Eveny people, which straddles the [Arctic Circle](#), is incredibly beautiful, but extremely remote. And with winter temperatures dropping down to 70 degrees Fahrenheit below zero (56 degrees below in Celsius), only [Antarctica](#) is colder. There are few roads — the Trans-Siberian railway runs hundreds of miles south.

The Eveny have long survived these conditions in close symbiosis with reindeer. “Reindeer were the basis of the Eveny economy,” says Dmitri Banin, a Silversea expedition expert who has chatted and traded with the Eveny before reindeer excursions. “Most of the Eveny reared reindeer and hunted. Some Eveny had reindeer pastures in the areas of the Kolyma, the Omolon and the Indigirka rivers.”

### **Vital reindeer**

There are thought to be over a million wild reindeer, called “buyun,” living in Russia, which are not herded but sometimes hunted. Another million are semi-domesticated “oron,” coexisting with indigenous groups that shadow their migration across the land to survive. And then there are the domesticated reindeer, or “uchakh,” that have been trained to be ridden and harnessed to sleighs. These companion animals act as the bridge between humans and the more wild reindeer.

In his book, “Reindeer People,” Vitebsky writes, “Apart from mining, there is no way that humans can make a living on this landscape except in partnership with the reindeer, and they cannot live with the reindeer except by following their perpetual migration.” The nomadic Eveny depend on reindeer for food, like meat and milk. Their clothing relies on the reindeer’s hide and fur, perfectly adapted to the [Arctic](#) temperatures with a double layer of hair, the fine undercoat covered with a coarse layer of hollow hairs that insulate and trap warmth.

In a harsh landscape where there may not be another person for a hundred miles or more, where there are few settlements and supplies, finding fuel for vehicles is not a given even if roads exist. Consequently, the Eveny depend on reindeer for transportation. The slight build of the Eveny allows herders to ride on “uchakhs,” which weigh about one-third that of a horse, and they have designed harnesses and sleighs to carry gear across the frozen tundra and the subpolar taiga.

### **Adaptation and modernization**

Some Eveny became semi-settled and work in fishing and hunting sea mammals, says Banin. With the arrival of the Russians, they hunted sables, foxes and squirrels which accounted for up to 90 percent of their income. “Collectivization in the 1930s was destructive for the Eveny traditional social structure, including the nomadic lifestyle,” says Banin. “Many nomadic Eveny settled down, joined collective farms called “kolkhozes” and occupied themselves in cattle-breeding and agriculture. Permanent settlements were formed.”

Today, many people live in wooden houses. But some Eveny still maintain large herds of reindeer of up to 2,000 animals. They spend part of the year in tents on the land, traveling with the reindeer as they move into the high mountain pastures during summer to graze and fatten. During the bitter winter, the herders retreat to winter huts in the shelter of the valleys while the reindeer survive on lichens. Back in the villages, even the people who don’t participate in herding still depend on the reindeer economy for trading meat and fur and selling antlers for Korean and Chinese medicine.

While some traditional aspects survive through language and mythology, others fade. “Ethnic tourism and interest in Eveny culture can slow down or partially reverse this process by conserving traditions that could be shown to visitors,” says Banin. Although there has been a loss of traditional culture — many young people have never even been to a reindeer camp — the language still lives. “The Eveny language is taught in preschool and primary school, together with Russian,” says Banin. “Only 19.9 percent consider Russian their native language. Eveny is used as an oral language for communication between reindeer herding brigades.”

Vitebsky notes in his book that one Eveny scholar has compiled 1,500 different words that refer to reindeer. For example, a “berne” is a reindeer that keeps getting lost and is vulnerable to wolves, and a “holimangan” is a salt-loving reindeer who will come to lick an offering of a handful of salt. This richness of language demonstrates how important reindeer are to the Eveny people, and how crucial they have been not only to a way of life but to life itself.

**“The Reindeer People: Living With Animals and Spirits in Siberia,” The New York Times, 16 December 2005 [70] <https://www.nytimes.com/2005/12/16/arts/the-reindeer-people-living-with-animals-and-spirits-in-siberia.html>**

#### Overview:

The Eveny, a traditionally nomadic people of northeastern Siberia, herd reindeer across the coldest inhabited territory on the globe.

During the endless winter, temperatures can drop to 71 degrees below zero Celsius, or 96 degrees below zero Fahrenheit. On cold days, hot tea thrown in the air from a mug descends in a shower of fine ice crystals. For prisoners of the Soviet gulag, this otherworldly land was hell on earth, the final stop before the grave.

For the Eveny and their close cousins, the Evenki, it is home sweet home: thousands upon thousands of square kilometers spread along the Arctic Circle, an area equal to about a third of the territory of Russia, inhabited by fewer than 50,000 native people.

#### Current & Relevant Information:

For nearly 20 years, Piers Vitebsky, a British anthropologist, has been visiting Sebyan, a village in the remote Verkhoyansk mountains.

He has headed out on the migratory trail with Eveny herders, braved the winter weather on a hunting expedition with a village elder, sat in on village political meetings and, above all, sat and listened as Eveny, young and old, talked to him about their lives and their prospects for the future. This is the material that informs "The Reindeer People," his low-key, often diffuse, but ultimately rewarding study of a people whose way of life harks back to the Age of Reindeer, a time, about 11,000 to 18,000 years ago, when reindeer nibbled their way from Paris to Brussels.

Nomadic by tradition, the Eveny submitted to forced relocation into villages under the Communists who, in the name of progress, waged a relentless campaign against their way of life, their beliefs and their shamans. Today, with the unraveling of the former Soviet Union, the Eveny must remake their lives again.

Everywhere, Vitebsky is confronted by contradictions. He found a widespread belief in nature spirits and animal guardians even among educated Eveny, who believe in Bayanay, the master spirit of the forest and its animals. He quickly learns to feed the fire god when entering a tent by splashing vodka on the burning logs. Yet out in the taiga, the Arctic forest, he meets the son of a solitary hunter who asks him about power sharing in Northern Ireland and what effect the Channel Tunnel might have on agricultural tariffs. For people who often communicate with one another by leaving snapped twigs along the trail, they seem surprisingly well informed about the world. In one herd, a highly sexed reindeer has been given the name Bill Clinton.

The Eveny express nostalgia for the old days. Yet some of their traditions go back only as far as the Russian Revolution. Under Soviet economic planners, reindeer herding was reorganized and the herds greatly expanded to ensure a steady supply of meat to new industrial centers being built in the north. That economic model has collapsed, and herd size is shrinking to preindustrial levels.

At the same time, the Soviets dismantled the clan-based system of herding. They forced women off the trail and into villages, where they now tend to regard reindeer herders as uncouth louts. "Young herders with their shy eyes are perceived as blank people," Vitebsky writes, "and the taiga, with its finely grained texture which only they can read, as a dead space." Rampant alcoholism, violence and suicide further darken the picture.

Vitebsky's happiest pages are devoted to the reindeer, the harsh beauty of the taiga, and the intimate bond between the Eveny and their animals. Each person has a reindeer guardian angel, and on the trail, wrapped in multiple layers of reindeer-skin clothing, the herders look a little like reindeer themselves.

Vitebsky is sensitive to every sight and sound in the Siberian wilderness: the clicking sound of reindeer walking, as their lower hind leg tendons snap across bone; the tinkling of their bells, made from tin cans; the counterclockwise swirling of the herd as it forms into a compact defensive formation.

Long hours with the herders can become tedious. A faithful transcriber, Vitebsky seems reluctant to let any conversation go unrecorded, and his narrative, loosely organized, often wanders aimlessly. "It isn't interesting, just chasing reindeer all your life," a village woman tells him, and there are times when the reader is inclined to agree.

Do the Eveny have a future? Some pessimists in the region foresee an exodus from the villages to the taiga, and the emergence of a feral population hunting feral reindeer. Vitebsky cannot quite accept that the Age of Reindeer is finally over. The Eveny, resourceful and tough, have carved out a living from the frozen wastes for centuries. They may even be able to cope with the end of the Soviet empire.

**“Arctic indigenous youth resilience and vulnerability: Comparative analysis of adolescent experiences across five circumpolar communities,” Olga**

**Ulturgasheva, et al., Transcultural Psychiatry, 2014 [71]**

<https://www.research.manchester.ac.uk/portal/files/23444494/POST-PEER-REVIEW-PUBLISHERS.PDF>

Abstract:

Arctic peoples today find themselves on the front line of rapid environmental change brought about by globalizing forces, shifting climates, and destabilizing physical conditions. The weather is not the only thing undergoing rapid change here. Social climates are intrinsically connected to physical climates, and changes within each have profound effects on the daily life, health, and well-being of circumpolar indigenous peoples. This paper describes a collaborative effort between university researchers and community members from five indigenous communities in the circumpolar north aimed at comparing the experiences of indigenous Arctic youth in order to come up with a shared model of indigenous youth resilience. The discussion introduces a sliding scale model that emerged from the comparative data analysis. It illustrates how a “sliding scale” of resilience captures the inherent dynamism of youth strategies for “doing well” and what forces represent positive and negative influences that slide towards either personal and communal resilience or vulnerability. The model of the sliding scale is designed to reflect the contingency and interdependence of resilience and vulnerability and their fluctuations between

lowest and highest points based on timing, local situation, larger context, and meaning.

#### Current & Relevant Information:

Based on data from the Circumpolar Indigenous Pathways to Adulthood (CIPA; Allen et al., 2014; this issue) study this paper aims to provide a comparative framework and shared model for understanding indigenous youth resilience across five indigenous Arctic communities. We attempt to accomplish both tasks by providing a comparative review of cross-site findings and by introducing a sliding-scale model that is meant to capture the fluid and dynamic nature of youth resilience. The “sliding scale” of youth resilience will point at the inherent dynamism of youth strategies for “doing well” and illustrate positive and negative influences that may “tip” a person or community towards either resilience or vulnerability. The discussion will show how the model of the sliding scale reflects the contingent, interdependent, and interactive aspects of youth resilience and vulnerability.

The CIPA study brings together researchers and community members representing four national regions of the Arctic and five northern community and cultural contexts. The four regions are Alaska, Canada, Norway, and Russia. The five communities are Alaskan Yup’ik, Alaskan Inupiaq, Canadian Inuit, Norwegian Sa’mi, and Siberian Eveny. Each project examined the unique contexts and challenges of different Arctic indigenous communities and highlights issues related to contemporary sources of vulnerability and resilience for youth growing up and coming of age today.

The five participating indigenous communities involved in the project represent culturally, socially, politically, and economically varied settings. Among them, the Canadian Inuit and the Sa’mi are recognized as the largest and most prominent groups who, over the last few decades, have gained the opportunity to exercise and maintain their own power structures within territorial autonomies and interact with national governments through local administrative bodies such as the Sa’mi parliament and Nunavut government (Plaut, 2012). The political involvement of Alaskan Yup’ik and Inupiaq with the state and the colonial government has been less advantageous regarding “self-rule.” The legacies of the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act (ANCSA) are complicated, offering unique opportunities for Alaska Native economic self-determinism (including health care), but can be seen as also undermining issues of sovereignty, self-governance, and subsistence rights (Huhndorf & Huhndorf, 2011). The group of Eveny reindeer herders and hunters is a small Siberian minority which over a long period of oppression by the Soviet and post-Soviet state has been forcibly prevented from exercising any form of political and economic autonomy. As we shall see, these differences have profound implications for indigenous young people’s perceptions of themselves, their identities, and the different scales of hardship and adversity within each community context. Youth from smaller and more disadvantaged groups have developed a

more acute sense of marginalization, and their challenges differ in scope and severity from politically and economically more prominent groups.

In addition to such political differences, there is important cross-site variability on the level of subsistence practices, livelihoods, and cultural systems. Yup'ik, Inupiaq, and Inuit, traditionally, are marine and tundra animal hunters and fishermen who occupy coastal areas of the American and Canadian Arctic. The Siberian Eveny and Norwegian Sa'mi, by contrast, are reindeer herders, whose socioeconomic systems depend on lichen pastures of tundra and taiga. Between Eveny and Sa'mi reindeer herders, there are also significant differences in the ways communities are economically maintained. For example, Sa'mi have incorporated large-scale industrialization within their traditional reindeer herding system using state-of-the-art technologies to manage reindeer and produce reindeer meat (Tyler, Turi, & Sundset, 2007). Eveny, on the other hand, have sustained their reliance on a hunting economy along with small-scale reindeer herding (Ulturgasheva, 2012; Vitebsky, 2005).

In this paper, we undertake a comparative analysis of findings from these five independent but interconnected research projects with a focus on understanding more about the experiences of contemporary youth in Arctic indigenous communities, and identifying resilience strategies that inform a successful transition to adulthood. The cross-site CIPA project design and methodologies have been described at length elsewhere (Allen et al., 2014; Ulturgasheva et al., 2011). Each study produced findings from an analysis of youth life histories from the particular community and these are presented in the papers of this special issue (Kral et al., 2014; Nystad, Spein, & Ingstad, 2014; Rasmus, Allen, & Ford, 2014; Ulturgasheva, 2014; Wexler et al., 2014). The study design involved: (a) monthly cross-site videoconference meetings to discuss findings from each local project site; (b) a review of each site's local findings; and (c) a cross-site workshop with researchers and community members to discuss findings and generate comparative categories reflecting youth resilience processes across sites.

The five collaborative contributions to this volume are the result of work conducted with different disciplinary approaches and research methodologies guiding the research process at each site. The papers present qualitatively different types of testimonies, methods of collecting information, engagement with the collected data, and proximity of university researchers to the participating communities. For example, the research data on Inuit youth provided by community members was processed by the team through the lens of cultural psychology and medical anthropology (Kral et al., 2014). The Alaskan Inupiaq narratives were collected by a non-Inupiaq interviewer and were interpreted by a public health research team with the guidance of a local steering committee (Wexler et al., 2014). The Norwegian Sa'mi interviews were personally gathered and interpreted by an indigenous investigator (Nystad et al., 2014). The Siberian Eveny youth narratives and

ethnographic case studies derive from ethnographic research in the community as well as translation, transcription, and data analysis carried out by a social anthropologist (Ulturgasheva, 2014). And the Alaskan Yup'ik work was carried out collaboratively in the community by an indigenous social scientist, a clinical community psychologist and graduate students (Rasmus et al., 2014). It is important to highlight that these investigators included three indigenous scholars whose personal perspectives, local expertise, and extensive fieldwork in the communities contributed significantly to the shaping of more detailed perceptions of the life experiences of young people, and to the common analytical framework of the study (Nystad et al., 2014; Rasmus, 2008; Rasmus et al., 2014; Ulturgasheva, 2012, 2013, 2014; Ulturgasheva et al., 2011).

## **Conclusion**

Our comparative study looking for shared processes across five Arctic indigenous communities provides a model for collaborative approaches to exploring contemporary youth experiences and resilience. We have shown that when facing situations of hardship and adversity, youth from each community deploy socially important and locally accessible resources. Even though the nature of hardships and challenges has changed and these are now largely an outcome of postcolonial modernity, indigenous youth still rely on important and integral aspects of community life such as sharing, extended family, fluid households, kinship-based peer networks, subsistence activities (reindeer herding, hunting, fishing), and culturally valued practices (speaking the native language, beadwork, traditional dance, yoiking, sewing traditional clothes). Thus, young people in our participating communities are still drawing from community strengths and culturally integrated mechanisms of protection as they creatively reimagine and strategically gain access to available resources.

The sliding scale proposed in this paper approaches Arctic indigenous youth resilience as part of a dynamic continuum, fluctuating between resilience and vulnerability. This allows us to capture youth's complex negotiations on their path to adulthood, and consider how young people flexibly optimize available, though not always reliable, local resources. Arctic indigenous vulnerability and resilience are interconnected in practice, sharing an internal capacity to slide between positive and negative influences.

We hope that our findings will be relevant for health intervention and prevention researchers and service providers working to reduce health disparities in substance abuse and suicide experienced among Arctic indigenous youth. Creating the necessary conditions for acquisition of resilience by youth requires increasing access to key resources and contexts for well-being in the community. Findings from this cross-site, comparative study point to the need for policy level action to support the development of healthy indigenous youth and communities in the circumpolar north.



**“The health of populations living in the indigenous minority settlements of northern Yakutia,” Tatiana E. Burtseva, et al., International Journal of Circumpolar Health, 2014 [72] <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC4216820/>**

Abstract:

This monograph contains the results of a study carried out by the Yakutsk Research Center for Complex Medical Problems, “Evaluating the health of the indigenous minorities of the Sakha Republic (Yakutia) and optimizing medical assistance using innovative technologies and telemedicine in indigenous settlements.” The child population was studied in 19 indigenous minority settlements, and the adult population was studied in 12 settlements.

Current & Relevant Information:

**Introduction**

Currently, in Russia, allocation of public health resources is highly standardized across the country, without any consideration for regional differences and ethnic-specific characteristics. Such an approach may be acceptable in European Russia, with its milder climate and relatively homogeneous population, but it is ill suited for the indigenous minority ethnic groups of Russia's Far North.

Due to its unique geography and ethnic composition, Yakutia is one of the more challenging regions in which to provide health care in Russia.

Yakutia has an area of 3,103.2 square kilometers, with a poorly developed transportation infrastructure, especially in the Far North, and a low population density. According to the Yakutia State Statistics Service (1998), the population density of the city of Yakutsk was 0.32 persons per square kilometer, while in a number of the Arctic regions, it ranged from 0.1 to 0.01 persons per square kilometer. Under these conditions, one of the most pressing public health issues is adequate provision of specialized medical care to all members of the population, regardless of location.

In 2002, the population of Yakutia was 949,300. People of Yakut ethnicity comprised 45.5% of the population, Evenks 1.9%, Evens 1.2%, Yukaghir 0.1% and Chukchi 0.1%. The northern indigenous minority peoples reside primarily in remote settlements, with poor transportation infrastructure, which understandably limits access to health care. Those who maintain a traditional lifestyle are most exposed to climate extremes. Endogamous marriages, not uncommon in remote settlements, serve to reinforce the physiological characteristics, which helped groups adapt to the environment. However, they also lead to a higher prevalence of genetic disorders. Taking transportation costs into account, health care spending is equivalent to, or even greater than, that for city populations.

There is thus a need for region-specific mechanisms for implementing government public health policies, and to improve public health services for the northern indigenous minority populations.

H. Evenk [Russia]:

**“Evenk People,” Britannica, 12 September 2018 [73]**

<https://www.britannica.com/topic/Evenk-people>

Overview:

Evenk, also called Evenki, Evenki also spelled Evenky or Ewenki, formerly Tungus, the most numerous and widely scattered of the many small ethnic groups of northern Siberia (Asian Russia).

Current & Relevant Information:

The Evenk numbered about 70,000 in the early 21st century. A few thousand live in Mongolia, and the remainder are almost equally divided between Russia and China. They are separable into two distinct cultures: hunters and reindeer breeders are scattered in the vast area of the taiga (boreal forest) from the Ob-Irtysh watershed eastward to the Sea of Okhotsk coast and Sakhalin, and from the Amur River basin in the south northward to the Arctic Ocean; horse and cattle pastoralists or sedentary farmers reside in Transbaikalia and northeastern China and Mongolia. Many of the Evenk are bilingual, and the Evenk language is not the native language of more than half of the ethnic Evenk.

The Evenk traditionally were organized in clans tracing their descent along paternal lines. The members of a clan had a communal fire and invoked common ancestor spirits in their prayers. Each clan was led by an assembly of elders, including the clan shaman (whose duties included healing the sick, traveling in the spirit world, and prophesying). Notably, the word shaman is itself an Evenk word.

After the Russian Revolution of 1917 the Russian Evenk were organized into collective farms, and in 1930 the Evenk national (now autonomous) okrug (district) was created. Most nomadic Evenk were settled, and their subsistence economy was supplemented by such activities as fur farming, agriculture, and industrial and government occupations.

**“Evenki Reindeer Herding: A History,” N.V. Ermolova, Cultural Survival, 26 March 2010 [74]**

<https://www.culturalsurvival.org/publications/cultural-survival-quarterly/evenki-reindeer-herding-history>

Overview:

Contemporary reindeer herding in Siberia varies greatly from region to region, due to influences of different environments, histories, and ethnic characteristics. The

Evenki, formerly known as the Tungus, practice taiga-type reindeer herding—also known as Evenki- or Tungus-type herding—in south Siberia’s mountainous zones.

Current & Relevant Information:

While scholars have made fine distinctions between the Evenki type of reindeer herding and the Sayan type practiced by the Tozhu, Tofa, and Dukha, these two types are more similar than different. (Vasilevich and Levin) Both are characterized by the use of reindeer for transportation purposes—as pack and riding animals—and for their milk products. Neither group farms reindeer for meat; in fact, the Evenki slaughter deer for food only in exceptional cases. Instead, using the deer as transport intensifies hunting and, consequently, increases the yield of game.

Like the Sayan, Evenki reindeer herding relies on small herds, with an optimal herd size of 20 to 30 deer per family. By comparison, the large-scale tundra reindeer herders who raise the animals primarily for meat have as many as 1,000 deer or more in one herd. Tundra-type herding is more extensive, with less contact between the herders and livestock. On the other hand, Evenki and Sayan reindeer herding is based on a closer relationship between the reindeer and the herder. As a result, Evenki and Sayan reindeer are tamer than tundra reindeer. Most deer in Evenki herds are used to being saddled and either ridden or burdened with a pack, and the does are used to being milked. The deer come to depend on specialized technologies requiring intensive and intimate contact between humans and deer, such as smudge pots to protect against midges and other biting insects, provision of salt, and protection from predators; thus, they never stray far from human settlements.

**“The Evenks,” eki.ee [75] <https://arhiiv.eki.ee/books/redbook/evenks.shtml>**

Overview:

The Evenks were formerly known as tungus. This designation was spread by the Russians, who acquired it from the Yakuts and the Siberian Tatars (in the Yakut language tungus) in the 17th century. The Evenks have several self-designations of which the best known is even, evenk. This became the official designation for the people in 1931. Some groups call themselves orochen 'an inhabitant of the River Oro', orochon 'a rearer of reindeer', ile 'a human being', etc. At one time or another tribal designations and place -- names have also been used as self-designations, for instance, manjagir, birachen, solon etc. Several of these have even been taken for separate ethnic entities. The Evens or Lamuts receive a separate mention, because though originally close to the Evenks, they are now considered to be a different people.

Current & Relevant Information:

The Evenks inhabit a huge territory of the Siberian taiga from the River Ob in the west to the Okhotsk Sea in the east, and from the Arctic Ocean in the north, to

Manchuria and Sakhalin in the south. The total area of their habitat is about 2.5 million square kilometers. In all of the Soviet Union only the Russians inhabit a larger territory. According to the administrative structure, the Evenks inhabit, amongst others, the Tyumen and Tomsk regions, the Krasnoyarsk district, the Irkutsk, Chita, and Amur regions, Buryatia and Yakutia, the Khabarovsk district and the Sakhalin region. However, their autonomous national territory is confined solely to the Krasnoyarsk district, where 3,200 of the 30,000 Evenks live. Close to 12,000 Evenks live in Yakutia. A large Evenk community (the Solon, the Tungus, the Ainak, the Nakagyr and the Orochon) lives in the northeast of China, close to the Soviet border, while others inhabit areas of Inner Mongolia and Manchuria.

**“Evenki,” B.C. Alexander, Arctic Photo, 2020 [76]**  
<https://www.arcticphoto.com/polar-info/polar-info24.htm>

#### Overview:

The Evenki are the most widely scattered of all the native peoples of Siberia. Today, about 30,000 Evenki inhabit a gigantic area of Siberian taiga that stretches from the River Ob in the west to the Okhotsk Sea in the east, and from the Arctic Ocean in the North, to Manchuria and the Island of Sakhalin in the South. The total area of their territory is over 2.5 million square kilometers.

#### Current & Relevant Information:

The original home of the Evenki, formerly known as the Tungus was the area around Lake Baikal in the south of Siberia, where all the ancient Tungusic groups originated. The anthropological features of the Evenki, are evident in the early Neolithic people around the shores of Lake Baikal. Pressure from other neighboring tribes led to the Tungus began to migrating eastwards to the Amur and the coast of the Okhotsk Sea, and also north, to the Lena River basin northwest, to the Yenisey River. They moved up to the tundra in the north, and the steppes in the south. As they extended through Eastern Siberia, they assimilated other tribes. The Evenki split into three different groups, ‘foot’, ‘reindeer’, & ‘horse’ with each developing a different dialect and way of life. Evenki horse and cattle breeders belonged to the ‘horse group’ and were involved in agriculture. Reindeer breeders who settled in the vast area from the Yenisey River to the Sea of Okhotsk and who also hunted and fished belonged to the ‘Reindeer’ group. The main occupation of the ‘foot’ group was hunting and trapping.

The Evenki settled in areas which had a similar environment mostly, mountain taiga and, to a lesser extent, mountain tundra. Their economy was based on reindeer breeding and hunting which allowed them to be extremely mobile and achieve an exceptional rate of expansion. Their whole traditional culture supported this mobile way of living: they had light conical tents, excellent skis, and light clothing. This way of life and its associated tools and equipment, formed the basis of the Tungus Culture.

## Social Issues:

**“Evenk,” Minority Rights Group International, December 2020 [77]**

<https://minorityrights.org/minorities/evenk/>

### Overview:

According to the 2010 national census, there are 37,843 Evenk in the Russian Federation. Evenk are composed of a number of groups that cover a vast area (approximately a quarter of Siberia). Formerly possessing a national autonomy, the Evenk Autonomous Okrug, they now form part of Krasnoyarsk Krai following a merger in 2007.

Evenk are one of the most geographically dispersed ethnic groups in Russia: up to half of Russia’s Evenk population lives in the Republic of Sakha (Yakutia). There is also a significant Evenk population (approximately 30,000) in the People’s Republic of China.

### Current & Relevant Information:

#### **Current issues**

In 2005 the populations of the Taimyr Autonomous Okrug (AOk), the Evenk AOк and Krasnoyarsk Krai voted in favor of the unification of the three regions in a referendum. The unification took place in January 2007.

Notwithstanding the fact that Evenk groups are geographically dispersed, they face similar difficulties in different parts of the country. One of the main problems is unemployment: the high costs of guns and the difficulties in obtaining a hunting license make it extremely difficult for Evenk to maintain themselves and their families through their traditional livelihoods. The absence of good infrastructure and modern medical centers has resulted in high levels of alcoholism and low life expectancy. As for the Evenk language, its situation remains precarious: a lack of financial assistance and teaching materials threaten the future development of the language.

Evenk leader Sergey Nikiforov, who opposed gold mining in Evenk ancestral territories, was sentenced in September 2015 to five years in a penal colony for allegedly accepting a bribe. He had led the protests of the Evenk community against gold mining in the Amur region, denouncing its harmful effects on the environmental conditions which are necessary for their traditional reindeer herding as well as the health of the local population.

**“Evenki,” B.C. Alexander, Arctic Photo, 2020 [78]**

<https://www.arcticphoto.com/polar-info/polar-info24.htm>

### Overview:

The Evenki are the most widely scattered of all the native peoples of Siberia. Today, about 30,000 Evenki inhabit a gigantic area of Siberian taiga that stretches from the

River Ob in the west to the Okhotsk Sea in the east, and from the Arctic Ocean in the North, to Manchuria and the Island of Sakhalin in the South. The total area of their territory is over 2.5 million square kilometers.

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#### Current & Relevant Information:

#### **Social Problems**

Even though the Evenki cover a vast area the social problems of unemployment, alcoholism and poverty are common throughout their territory. The root of these problems can be attributed to a loss of traditional lands and cultural.

**“Evenki,” Encyclopedia.com, 3 December 2024 [79]**

<https://www.encyclopedia.com/history/modern-europe/russian-soviet-and-cis-history/evenki>

#### Abstract:

The Evenki are an indigenous people of central and eastern Siberia, Mongolia, and Inner Mongolia. Although there has been a great deal of controversy among scholars regarding their original homeland, the most reliable anthropological, linguistic, and archaeological evidence indicates that the Evenki were formed to the east of Lake Baikal in southeastern Siberia around 1000 bc. They then spread throughout eastern and northern Siberia, mixing and intermarrying with other native

Siberian peoples. In addition to the general name Evenki (which means simply "person" or "people"), they identify themselves by the names of their clans or tribes: Birat, Ile, Manegir, Mata, Orochen, and so on. Although the word Evenki is a singular term in the Evenki language itself, it is used as a plural in Russian, the Russian singular being Evenk for a male and Evenkiika for a female. In recent decades, the use of Evenki as both singular and plural has become common among most non-Russian writers, although one occasionally encounters the form Evenk/Evenks. In older Russian and Western ethno-graphic literature, the Evenki were formerly referred to by the term Tungus, which is derived from Tongus, the Yakut word for "Evenki."

The Evenki have long been known for their skill at hunting reindeer, bear, moose, sable, squirrel, and other animals, and they rely on hunting for most of their food. The Evenki are divided into two main groups based on the economic activities they perform in addition to hunting. Those of central and northeastern Siberia, herd reindeer, and those of southeastern Siberia, Mongolia, and China, raise horses and cattle. A smaller, eastern group along the coast of the Sea of Okhotsk-often called the "sitting Evenki" because they own no reindeer-has traditionally lived exclusively by hunting forest animals and seals and fishing.

The Evenki have been under Russian and Chinese rule since their conquest during the 17th century by the Romanov and Qing dynasties respectively. Much of the vast territory they originally occupied was gradually taken from them by the government and given to Russian settlers. Nevertheless, with the exception of tax collection (originally in the form of furs), sporadic campaigns by the Russian Orthodox Church to Christianize them, and occasional arrests and trials for theft and other crimes that directly affected the Russian settler community, significant official interference in the day-to-day life of the Evenki came only in the Soviet period. During the 1930s, Evenki hunters and herdsman were forced into collectives as part of the collectivization of agriculture. Stalin's campaign to rapidly develop Soviet industry simultaneously led to an enormous influx of Russians and other outsiders into Evenki territory to exploit its timber and mineral resources. This resulted in serious environmental damage to ancestral Evenki lands.

#### Current & Relevant Information:

### **SOCIAL PROBLEMS**

The foremost social problems facing today's Evenki are ecological and economic. During the Soviet period, the government seized Evenki hunting and herding grounds in order to implement logging and mining projects and build hydroelectric dams. This was done without considering either the wishes of the Evenki or the impact on Siberia's fragile ecosystem. As a result, pollution, over foresting, and flooding have severely damaged the Evenki environment, exacerbating health problems and leading to a decline in the animal population upon which traditional



Evenki economic activities depend. During the 1950s and 1960s, small, isolated Evenki settlements were abolished, and their inhabitants were moved into larger villages. The Soviet planners behind this policy hoped that it would improve economic efficiency. Instead, the resulting increased burden on the environment led to declining productivity in meat and fur production, a significant drop in the Evenki standard of living, and a corresponding rise in alcoholism. In the late 1980s, a group of Evenki activists managed to get back a small part of the land that the Soviet government had taken. The result was an improved standard of living and a dramatic drop in alcohol abuse among the Evenki who returned. At about the same time, Evenki ecological activists succeeded in blocking the construction of a dam that would have flooded much of the Evenki Autonomous District.

Cultural survival is another major struggle for the Evenki. Although the Soviet Union's political leaders paid lip service to the official ideal of ethnic and cultural equality, in reality non-Russian cultures and languages (especially those of the numerically small Siberian peoples) were often suppressed. Since Mikhail Gorbachev's liberalization of censorship and minority policies in the 1980s, native journalists, teachers and scholars have worked energetically to increase knowledge of and pride in their cultural heritage among younger Evenki.

**“Indigenous People and Political Agenda: the Issue of Social and Ecological Change of the Nomadic Siberian, the Evenki, in Russia,” Jaehoon Lee, *Journal of Contemporary Anthropology*, 2013 [80]**

<https://docs.lib.purdue.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1021&context=jca>

Abstract:

Siberia is one of a few regions of the world in which hunter-gatherer communities survived until very recently. Many of their descendants have sustained their old subsistence economies, such as hunting and fishing, nomadism, or reindeer herding. This paper contains the ethnohistory of the indigenous Evenki people in Siberia and provides a critical summary of how changes of colonial political systems and management policies throughout the Evenki's history have affected their cultural identity and changed their concept of territorial value. It is emphasized in this paper that, as seen in the case of the Evenki in Siberia, a sophisticated understanding of the environment and subsistence systems of the indigenous peoples in the world is an essential process for all policy makers whose decisions would directly affect the life system of indigenous or isolated peoples.

Current & Relevant Information:

**Introduction**

While this paper presents an overview of the ethnohistory of the Evenki, its focus is how the history of the political changes of the Russian colonizer has affected the overall cultural life of the Evenki in Siberia. Some examples will be presented

portraying the active roles of land management policies that have played a part in changing the cognitive concept of territorial value for the Evenki. This paper seeks to emphasize the need for more effort on a sophisticated understanding of the Evenki and their culture by the Russian authority. This paper consists of two parts: first, brief but contextual aspects of the Evenki; and second, concise discourses about the relations between the political framework and the Evenki, on behalf of the indigenous people of Siberia.

### **The Evenki in Siberia**

The Evenki (or Evenks) are the most widely dispersed indigenous people in Siberia. Although their communities are scattered, they currently inhabit a broad region from most of Central Siberia through Mongolia and Manchuria. Despite a relatively small population, the total area that the Evenki inhabit, at present, is about 2.5 million square kilometers (1.55 million sq miles). The Evenki populations range from Central Siberia and the Arctic Ocean in the north to Manchuria, eastern Mongolia and Sakhalin in the south; and from the River Ob in the west to the Pacific coast of the Russian Far East in the east. However, most of the Evenki live in Eastern Siberia and the Russian Far East regions. They live side by side with the Even (Evenki cousins) and the Sakhan (descendants of northeast Turkic tribes who migrated during the fifteenth century) (Anderson 2002:7; Mote 1998:25, 182).

### **Summary and Conclusion**

The indigenous in Siberia have occupied around 60 percent of the modern Russian territory, although their population is less than one percent of the entire population of the Russian Federation. They have experienced an enormous influx of newcomers involved in industrial exploitation because their inhabited areas are rich in natural resources. As with other indigenous peoples throughout the world, indigenous Siberians have suffered centuries of deprivation and experienced the loss of not only land but also their cultural identity. According to recent reports, although the Evenki strive to keep and practice their old system based on a traditional clan organization, some of them are more concerned with current policies of the national and federal governments, which have been directly or indirectly affecting their lifestyle. Therefore, family, territorial principles, and nationalities, which are mostly new concepts for the Evenki, are more commonly centered on their current life, especially among peoples who no longer engage in traditional subsistence forms (Sirina 2005:203).

Currently the hardships of the post-Soviet economic transition continue to harass the indigenous populations in Siberia and produce social problems, such as high rates of infant mortality, homicide and suicide, and erosion of traditional cultures: it has been noted that the number of some groups for indigenous populations dropped sharply in the last several decades (Forsyth 1992:401). After the collapse of the Soviet Union, these problems are openly recognized and the indigenous populations

have tried to organize themselves more effectively to seek better ways of preserving their identity and land; it has been reported that Russian migration and industrial exploitation in Siberia have slowed down (Matveeva et al. 1997:306). The indigenous however “have also had to face a new set of challenges, the most important of which, land privatization, threatens the security of their land rights and their aim of creating ‘reserved territories.’ The growing demands for access to the resource-rich areas of the north by domestic and international mineral extraction companies has raised the issue of what rights the native peoples should have in the future economic exploitation of their homelands” (Matveeva et al. 1997:306).

Without exception, hegemonic and economic interests in Siberia have put the Evenki into this delicate situation. Since developing natural resources in Siberia have directly affected the mode of subsistence for the Evenki, they have been forced to change not only their habitation but also cultural identity (Fondahl 1998). As the Evenki try to maintain their old customs and traditions under those pressures, they also voice their discontents to obtain their rights as any other indigenous population does in the world. While the meaning of land for the Evenki has been shifted from “a relationship to land based on a personalized entitlement to a growing consciousness of territory and the incumbent notion of rights” (Anderson 2002:170), they are looking for their equitable role and right in decision-making over critical resource-development initiatives on their native territory (Dampilon and Plumley 2003:39). They are now placed in a vulnerable position in transition period to the world of market economy and unavoidably they need to be familiar with the concept of privatization or ownership of land. Therefore, they might have to face a legal status for each ethnic or clan territory.

While the ethnicity and cultural identity of any people in the world have been playing as important a role in our modern societies for decision-making as they are involved and connected into economic and political issues, the case of the Evenki people in Siberia is a good example in showing that the indigenous have suffered and struggled due to poor administrative plans which have been authorized and affected by the political authorities that do not have enough ethnoecological considerations for the indigenous peoples in Siberia. Political issues from the past Soviet regime to the current government of the Russian Federation should have been strongly factored in and considered in the process of making policies for the indigenous. It is also obvious that many local government administrators must have not given enough importance the indigenous knowledge and biological variability of the indigenous people before deciding on any policy affecting the subsistence system of the indigenous peoples although the governmental authorities from the previous Soviet Union to current Russian government have tried to approach the indigenous peoples in Siberia based on ethnographical data by many scholars.

The winds of change from Eastern Europe had hit and affected peoples’ life not only in Eastern Europe, Central Asia, and Russia but also the Evenki in Siberia in the last

several decades. Time has passed and people's ideology has continued to change with the stream of time. Now the Evenki are asserting their place to be the center in the stream of change of human history. They want to be the subject for any kind of change, rather than just being the object. It might be too early to predict or discuss the political future of the Evenki, whether the Evenki eventually become the realistic subjects of their own property as they wish or not. However, it is apparent that there is rising ethnic consciousness among the Evenki and the existence of some competition even among the Evenki regarding more rights in the community or individual properties. It is also evident that while many territories for the indigenous are already subordinated to federal law and involved with environmental issues, the traditional subsistence lifestyle of the Evenki have had direct impact from such conditions. Therefore, it is necessary that concerned voices for the poor socio-economic and cultural position of the Evenki should be heard by the local government and eventually by the central government. Policy makers in the Russian Federation should acknowledge the situation for a balanced political and social benefit between the majority and the indigenous so as to avert any kind of violent struggle that could ensue between ethnic groups or between the majority and the indigenous in Siberia. It is apparent that keeping the unique knowledge of reindeer husbandry and cognitive value of land property for the Evenki people are important parts of their social memories that deserve to be maintained in their daily life and passed on to the next generations.

**“An Evenki Youth Leadership Organization's Effort to Advance Territories of Traditional Nature Use,” Zhargal Dampilon and Daniel Plumley, Cultural Survival, 26 March 2010 [81] <https://www.culturalsurvival.org/publications/cultural-survival-quarterly/evenki-youth-leadership-organizations-effort-advance>**

#### Overview:

Numerous plans to build natural gas and oil pipelines across Transbaikalia have been proposed over the past several years, spurred by regional, national, and international interest in developing Siberia's natural resources. Although these proposals represent millions of dollars just in planning and surveying pipeline routes, little effort has been made to inform Native Siberians about the costs (environmental, social, or otherwise) and benefits of such development, or their role, rights, and authority in decision-making over these critical resource-development initiatives.

#### Current & Relevant Information:

During August, September, and October 2002, the Totem Peoples Preservation Project (a Cultural Survival Special Project) and the Evenki Youth Group GIEVUN (an Evenki word meaning "youth") collaborated to address this problem by initiating public education workshops in various Evenki communities in northern areas of the Republic of Buryatia, where some 2,000 Evenki live. These workshops focused on empowering small, rural, and remote Native Evenki communities through the

recognition, advancement, and realization of Russia's new federal law On Territories of Traditional Natural Resource Use of the Indigenous Small-Numbered Peoples of the North, Siberia, and the Far East of the Russian Federation.

**“Endangered Communities? The Politics of Indigenous Peoples in Siberia,”  
Mackensie Knorr, Wilson Center [82]**

<https://www.wilsoncenter.org/publication/endangered-communities-the-politics-indigenous-peoples-siberia>

Overview:

The recent suspension of RAIPON, the main umbrella organization that represents the interests of indigenous peoples in Russia, opens the question of how Russia's indigenous groups will be able to defend their lands and rights. At a 28 January 2013 presentation at the Kennan Institute, Marjorie Mandelstam Balzer, Research Professor at Georgetown University, Editor of Anthropology and Archeology of Eurasia, and former Title VIII-supported Research Scholar of the Kennan Institute, Woodrow Wilson Center, discussed RAIPON's fate, the broader challenges facing indigenous peoples in Russia, and the implications for Russian civil society.

Current & Relevant Information:

RAIPON, the Russian Association of Indigenous Peoples of the North, Siberia, and the Far East, was suspended by the Russian government in November 2012. RAIPON was founded in 1990 and has a membership of over 300,000 people from 41 indigenous groups across Russia. Balzer explained that her presentation was timely because the Russian government recently allowed RAIPON to hold an emergency meeting to solve bureaucratic issues such as the need for properly registered logos, and the affiliation of groups from at least 42 regions within the Russian Federation in order to meet the requirements of a national public association in Russia.

Balzer contended that RAIPON was suspended not merely for administrative technicalities, but due to the group's efforts to contest or influence major energy projects in the North, especially those of Gazprom, RosEnergo and RosHydro. Attention to the Northern regions and their indigenous peoples is also increasing because of the opening of the Northern Sea Route for shipping. Energy and transport projects are bringing an influx of investment and workers, in part administered by the Ministry of Regional Development, which is also responsible for indigenous peoples' protection. Arctic development potential has increased private and government attention to indigenous peoples' lands.

A key issue Russia's indigenous communities face in defending their status stems from legal definitions of identity. Balzer reported that the state is narrowing that definition as much as possible so that fewer people get legal dispensations such as tax breaks, quotas, and special licenses for access to fishing, hunting, forestry, and

land. “There is very little room for self-identity in these definitions,” Balzer explained, when the power of defining identity, in terms of holding protected status, is state-directed and specified for those in groups under 50,000.

Balzer warned that new legal constraints are being placed on Russia’s indigenous peoples. A draft law is set to update the 1996 law concerning the territories of indigenous peoples and their traditional land use. It stipulates that for indigenous peoples to remain with special status on their lands, they must practice subsistence living, reside on lands documented as ancestral, and they must know their native languages. These are challenging standards to meet: recent land auctions and changing boundaries have already shrunk indigenous territories, and many have lost their native languages because of Sovietization language policies. Nearly half their populations reside in villages and towns.

Varied ways of life of indigenous groups, though they may be predominantly traditional, are legally problematic. Moscow recently revoked the fishing rights of a Nanai community in the Amur River area because they rode snowmobiles to reach their sites of traditional land use. A local judge had asserted that they should have been riding reindeer, yet they had never bred or ridden reindeer. Additionally, an Evenki community in Buriatia has been accused of running an illegal jade mining operation, although some Evenki had traditionally mined jade prior to the arrival of Russians in their region. The Evenki mine director is missing, with murder and multi-level corruption suspected. In other regions, Evenki reindeer breeders have lost their lands to hydroelectric dam projects. Ultimately, new laws may be used to further revoke the land rights of indigenous peoples in favor of Russian energy, transport and mining projects.

“The issue is not just the bureaucratic fight, but the trauma that has gone so deep in these communities,” said Balzer, quoting her Sakha colleague Uliana Vinokurova, who is worried about increased suicides and alcoholism. Another indigenous leader explained that in Sel’kup and Khanty areas: “People’s homes are being burned in suspicious fires” and several villages have been burned to frighten indigenous people, so that energy exploitation can continue without native interference.

Balzer stressed indigenous leaders do not automatically oppose development projects. Rather, they advocate for indigenous representatives to have input and ecological oversight concerning these projects. Native input is necessary to ensure that reindeer corridors, graveyards, and other sacred sites are protected. Additionally, the disastrous 2009 collapse of the Sayano–Shushensk Hydroelectric Dam in Khakassia demonstrates the importance of ecological oversight in energy projects. Balzer also referred to massive Gazprom purchases of land in the Sakha Republic (Yakutia), and to three documented gas pipeline breaches that have occurred near the Lena River, influencing Evenki reindeer breeding patterns and alarming Sakha ecology activists.

Evoking theorists like Arjun Appadurai and Benedict Anderson, Balzer explained that indigeneity is relational and shifting. A crucial generalization was that larger indigenous groups with their own republics (Altai, Buriatia, Khakassia, Sakha, Tuva) have significant legal protections and strong ethnonational community identities. These diminish when levels of homeland protection are just at the “okrug” level, or non-existent. Alarming, two Buriat satellite districts were recently abolished, and Native local parliamentary representation has been threatened in the Saami and Khanty-Mansi regions.

Balzer observed that RAIPON’s future has implications for Russia’s civil society as a whole. Individuals and groups increasingly have been put into “opposition” or “dissident” categories that they do not recognize for themselves. Balzer argued, “a strategic chill is being applied by the state on various symbolic targeted actors, and the indigenous peoples of the North, Siberia, and the Far East, as represented by RAIPON, have joined a line of other recent examples,” such as key ecology activists, plus Igor Magnitsky, Aleksei Navalny, and members of Pussy Riot. However, the recent crackdown on RAIPON has generated an ironic positive effect: the threat to its existence has sparked increased solidarity among often in-fighting activists of indigenous peoples. Balzer concluded: “One of the hallmarks of civil society is how it handles its indigenous peoples.”

#### I. Gwichin [Canada/US-Alaska]:

**“The Gwichin,” Gwichin Steering Committee** [83] <https://ourarcticrefuge.org/about-the-gwichin/>

##### Overview:

The Gwich’in are the northernmost Indian Nation living in fifteen small villages scattered across a vast area extending from northeast Alaska in the U.S. to the northern Yukon and Northwest Territories in Canada.

The word “Gwich’in” means “people of the land,” and it refers to a people who have lived in the region since before the U.S. and Canada existed. Today, the Gwich’in homelands span both countries. Oral tradition indicates the Gwich’in have occupied this area since time immemorial, or, according to conventional belief, as long as 20,000 years.

##### Current & Relevant Information:

Nine thousand Gwich’in people make their home on or near the migratory route of the Porcupine Caribou Herd, and have depended on caribou for their subsistence way of life for thousands of years. Today, as in the days of their ancestors, the caribou is still vital for food, clothing, tools, and are a source of respect and spiritual guidance for the Gwich’in.

#### **Alaska**



The Gwich'in in Alaska live in nine communities, Arctic Village, Beaver, Birch Creek, Canyon Village, Chalkyitsik, Circle, Eagle Village, Fort Yukon and Venetie. Their communities are organized under tribal governments with elected chiefs and councils. The Council of Athabascan Tribal Governments is a consortium of the Gwich'in and two Koyukon tribal governments to address regional concerns as directed by the tribes.

## **Yukon**

Vuntut Gwitchin is the name of people who live in the settlement of Old Crow, Yukon. The name in the Gwich'in language means "people of the lakes". Old Crow is the northernmost Yukon community, located at the confluence of the Crow and Porcupine Rivers.

## **Northwest Territories**

The Gwich'in communities Fort McPherson (Teetl'it Zheh), Tsiigehtchic, Aklavik and Inuvik in the Northwest Territories are located in the region of the Mackenzie Delta.

**"About the Gwichin," GTC Department of Cultural Heritage, 2016 [84]**  
<https://www.gwichin.ca/about-the-gwichin>

### Overview:

We are one of the most northerly Indigenous peoples on the North American continent, living at the northwestern limits of the boreal forest. Only the Inuit live further north. We are part of a larger family of Indigenous people known as Athapaskans, which include peoples such as the Slavey, Dogrib, Han and Tutchone but our language and way of life is distinct.

### Current & Relevant Information:

At the time of contact with Euro-Canadians, we lived in nine different bands with lands stretching from the interior of Alaska through the Yukon and into the Mackenzie Valley. In the Northwest Territories, we now live primarily in the communities of Fort McPherson, Tsiigehtchic, Aklavik and Inuvik and we number about 3440 people. We still maintain close cultural and family ties with our Gwich'in relatives in the Yukon and Alaska, and together we total over 6000 people in 15 communities.

Traditionally, our lands extended from the mountain headwaters of the Peel and Arctic Red Rivers in the south, to the Mackenzie Delta in the north, from the Anderson River in the east, to the Richardson Mountains in the west. Many families still maintain summer and winter camps outside our communities. Hunting, fishing and trapping remain important both culturally and economically, with caribou, moose and whitefish being staples of our diet.

**“Gwichin People,” Britannica, 16 November 2024 [85]**

<https://www.britannica.com/topic/Gwichin>

Overview:

**Gwich'in**, a group of Athabaskan-speaking North [American Indian](#) tribes [inhabiting](#) the basins of the [Yukon](#) and Peel rivers in eastern [Alaska](#) and Yukon—a land of coniferous forests interspersed with open, barren ground. The name Gwich'in, meaning “people,” is given collectively to an indefinite number of distinct [American Subarctic peoples](#), there being no precise agreement among authorities on whom to include under this cover name, which is as much linguistic as cultural.

In traditional Gwich'in social organization, men became chiefs by demonstrating leadership or prowess in hunting or war. Men's major pursuits included battle, fishing, and hunting caribou, moose, and other game. Women's pursuits included making nearly all household goods, gathering wild plant foods, and transporting their families and material possessions during frequent moves from one camp to another.

Current & Relevant Information:

The Gwich'in people's most influential neighbors were the [Eskimo](#), or Inuit, with whom they traded and fought and from whom they borrowed such cultural traits as tailored caribou-skin clothing (most conspicuously, the Eskimo hood and mittens), various hunting weapons, and the sled. They also shared many customs with tribes to the south and east—painting their faces and hair, wearing feathers as hair ornaments, and decorating their clothing with [fringes](#) and beads. Gwich'in houses were domed structures of poles and fir boughs, banked with snow in winter and ventilated by a smoke hole at the top. Little is known of Gwich'in religion or beliefs, but they were well known for their feasts, games (especially wrestling), singing, and dancing.

Early 21st-century population estimates indicated more than 4,500 individuals of Gwich'in descent.

**“The History Of The Gwich'in Gathering,” Alaska Wilderness League, 15 July**

**2016 [86]** <https://www.alaskawild.org/blog/the-history-of-the-gwichin-gathering/>

Overview:

In June of 1988, the elders and traditional leaders of the Gwich'in Athabascans congregated for the first customary gathering of their Nation in more than a century. July 26th will mark the first day of the 15th biennial Gwich'in Gathering, this year in Arctic Village.

Current & Relevant Information:

Today, approximately nine thousand Gwich'in people live in fifteen small villages scattered across the northernmost parts of Alaska and Canada, making their home on or near the migratory route of the Porcupine Caribou Herd. In accordance with tradition, when the first Gathering was held in 1988 a talking stick was used, and those in attendance unanimously decided to speak with one voice against oil and gas development in the birthing and nursing grounds of the Porcupine Caribou Herd.

The Arctic National Wildlife Refuge is deeply important to the Gwich'in way of life. Known in Gwich'in as "Izhik Gwats'an Gwandaii Goodlit" – the Sacred Place Where Life Begins – the Coastal Plain of the Arctic Refuge acts as the calving grounds for the Porcupine Caribou Herd, a source of primary sustenance for the Gwich'in. The Gwich'in people are "people of the land," and as residents of a region extending from northeast Alaska to the northern Yukon and Northwestern Territories of Canada for more than 20,000 years, it is safe to say that their knowledge of and connection to the Refuge is strong.

#### Social Issues:

**"As Gwich'in, we will never stop fighting for our land," Bernadette Demientieff, The Hill, 27 November 2020 [87] <https://thehill.com/opinion/energy-environment/527541-as-gwichin-we-will-never-stop-fighting-for-our-land>**

#### Overview:

Despite losing the election, the Trump administration is barreling ahead with oil and gas development in the calving grounds of the Porcupine caribou herd, known as the coastal plain of the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge in Alaska. In a last ditch effort, they issued a call for nominations to lease this sacred land to oil and gas companies.

#### Current & Relevant Information:

If the lease sale moves forward, it would likely happen mere days before the January inauguration of President-elect Joe Biden. Once this happens, it will make development much more difficult to stop because companies will have the legal right to extract oil and gas in the refuge.

In the midst of this global pandemic, instead of focusing on how they can be supportive of Indigenous communities, the Trump administration continues to disrespect and disregard sacred land to our people.

This rush to develop is dismissing and ignoring our voices and is in violation of our right to free, prior and informed consent. It will have a devastating impact on the land and animals of the refuge. As Indigenous Peoples, we are spiritually and culturally connected to the land, the water and the animals. Any harm to them is harm to the Gwich'in.

We call the coastal plain, Izhik Gwats'an Gwandaii Goodlit, "The Sacred Place Where Life Begins." Since time immemorial, we have had a spiritual, physical and

cultural connection to the Porcupine caribou. The caribou have the longest land migration of any animal on the planet. Every year, the caribou travel thousands of miles through Canada and Alaska to the coastal plain where they give birth to up to 40,000 calves in a two-week period. This area is so sacred to us that we never step foot there, even in times of extreme famine.

I pray we never have to answer the question: What does “the sacred place where life begins” look like during and after oil and gas exploration and development? To us, this encroachment is sacrilegious — like someone driving a bulldozer through a church. The intense physical invasion of industry to this pristine and life-sustaining environment would be catastrophic to every aspect of our health, safety and wellbeing.

Seismic testing, proposed to begin in December by the U.S. Bureau of Land Management (BLM), would bring 90,000 pound trucks applying thousands more pounds of force and vibrations into the ground, having serious impact on not only the caribou but for denning polar bears and the surrounding fragile tundra. This type of oil exploration is so harmful that the land still bears scars from seismic testing that happened here 40 years ago.

The high-risk development process will inject pollutants into all of our natural resources. Land and water will absorb waste waters and production fluids, saltwater and other hazardous substances. Drilling will also rob us of valuable freshwater, which will be used to build ice roads and ice pads, for well stimulation and production and to supply workers’ base camps. Exhaust from construction equipment and power generation will travel great distances through the air. Not to mention the risks of oil spills or pipeline leaks that are routine to the industry. Women and children are especially at risk given the high rates of sexual violence and human trafficking that often follows extractive projects.

These risks are compounded by the fact that neither oil and gas producers, nor governments, offer protection or rapid remedy to impacts from these environmental and human rights disasters.

We don’t only feel attacked by the Trump administration, but we are also under threat from climate change. The Gwich’in and other Indigenous communities already bear the brunt of the negative impacts of the global climate crisis. The Arctic is warming at three times the rate than the rest of the world. Birth numbers of the caribou are diminishing, every year large numbers of fish are dying in the warming seas and our people have witnessed flocks of birds falling dead from the sky. Warming temperatures have introduced ticks to the area for the first time in known history, and with ticks, we fear disease. Hunters, with years of experience, are dying after falling through ice in areas that are usually frozen at this time of year. (These issues and more are detailed in our Arctic Indigenous Climate Summit Report.)

We are doing everything we can to protect the coastal plain and the land and wildlife in the Arctic Refuge. The Gwich'in and allied groups have taken this fight to elected leaders, financial institutions, insurers, the United Nations and the courts. We have facilitated legislation, litigation and advocacy with banks, energy suppliers and insurance companies.

And these efforts are working. Recent polling of voters shows the majority of people in America oppose drilling in the Arctic Refuge. To date, more than two dozen international financial institutions have created policies that prohibit funding drilling projects in the Arctic Refuge, including five of the six major U.S. banks. Insurance company Axa recently made public a commitment to not insure Arctic oil and gas exploration. And in August, the United Nations answered our petition and are currently investigating U.S. human rights violations.

Despite all this, and despite the fact that Biden has reopened the door to protecting the Arctic Refuge, the Trump administration's push to develop the area is a reminder that our lands and lifeways will always be in danger if we allow profits over people.

We are real people. We are mothers and grandmothers. And we are not asking for anything but the ability to live and thrive off the land that the Creator blessed us with.

**“In Arctic Village, Gwich'in leaders say the fight to stop drilling in the Arctic Refuge isn't over,” Elizabeth Harball, Alaska Public Media, 2 July 2019 [88]**  
<https://www.alaskapublic.org/2019/07/02/in-arctic-village-gwichin-leaders-say-the-fight-to-stop-drilling-in-the-arctic-refuge-isnt-over/>

#### Overview:

One thing lies at the heart of Gwich'in tribes' opposition to oil development in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge: caribou.

#### Current & Relevant Information:

At Arctic Village's annual spring carnival in April, men gathered around a plastic folding table for a contest to see who could skin a caribou leg the fastest. Their knives worked swiftly from knee to cloven hoof, hands tugging meat, tendon and hide from bone.

Second place went to David Smith Jr., 22. Smith is a leader — the second chief — in Arctic Village. And like most everyone here, Smith believes oil development in the refuge that borders their tribal lands will endanger the caribou his people hunt.

“And that's going to change our very lifestyle,” Smith said. “The reason we're here is for the caribou.”

Until recently, the residents of 15 Gwich'in villages scattered across northeast Alaska and northwest Canada were on the winning side of the drawn-out political battle in Washington, D.C. over oil development in the refuge. They helped fight

repeated attempts in Congress to legalize drilling in the refuge's 1.6 million-acre coastal plain.

Then, in late 2017, Congress opened the coastal plain to oil development. So Gwich'in tribes are now taking unprecedented steps to try to protect a resource they call vital to their culture and survival.

Caribou are a primary source of subsistence food in Arctic Village — more than that, they're part of the tribes' cultural identity. And today, some 200,000 caribou in the Porcupine herd travel past Arctic Village and other Gwich'in communities every year.

Smith said the caribou they harvest allow Arctic Village residents to continue their traditional way of life, on their traditional land.

**““Our identity is non-negotiable” says Gwich'in leader Bernadette Demientieff,” Rhett A. Butler, Mongabay, 8 March 2021 [89]**

<https://news.mongabay.com/2021/03/our-identity-is-non-negotiable-says-gwichin-leader-bernadette-demientieff/>

#### Overview:

- The Arctic National Wildlife Refuge (ANWR) is a 19-million-acre reserve in the northeastern corner of Alaska that's renowned for its beauty and wildlife. ANWR also holds great cultural significance to the Native peoples of the region, including the Gwich'in Nation, who for generations have depended on the migratory caribou herd that births and calves its young in the coastal plain of the refuge.
- Bernadette Demientieff is of the Gwichyaa Zhee Gwich'in, a Gwich'in tribe that lives in and around Fort Yukon, a town directly south of ANWR. The Gwich'in are known as “the caribou people” for the significance caribou play in their history, culture, and traditions.
- During a February 2021 interview with Mongabay, Demientieff spoke about the threat oil drilling and climate change pose to Gwich'in way of life.
- “The Gwich'in and the porcupine caribou herd have had a spiritual and cultural connection since time immemorial,” Demientieff said. “Our identity is non-negotiable; we will never sell our culture and our traditional lifestyle for any amount of money.”

#### Current & Relevant Information:

The Arctic National Wildlife Refuge (ANWR) is a 19-million-acre reserve in the northeastern corner of Alaska that's renowned for its beauty and wildlife. ANWR also holds great cultural significance to the Native peoples of the region, including the Gwich'in Nation, who for generations have depended on the migratory caribou herd that births and calves its young in the coastal plain of the refuge. The Gwich'in have thus been some of the staunchest opponents of opening up ANWR to oil drilling.

But in 2017, over the objections of many Indigenous leaders and environmental groups, Congress passed legislation authorizing drilling in ANWR. In January 2021, just days before Joe Biden was to take office, the Trump administration held an auction for the right to drill in the refuge. Interest however was tepid: the sale raised less than \$15 million. No major oil companies participated in the auction.

Of the reasons the oil auction was a bust, the campaign by the Gwich'in was arguably among the most compelling, helping broaden the issue into one of human rights, traditional Indigenous culture, and reverence for wildlife and the landscape. As the Executive Director of Gwich'in Steering Committee, a body established in 1988 in response to proposals to drill in ANWR, Bernadette Demientieff has had a leadership role in the campaign against drilling.

Demientieff is of the Gwichyaa Zhee Gwich'in, a Gwich'in tribe that lives in and around Fort Yukon, a town directly south of ANWR. The Gwichyaa Zhee Gwich'in are one among several tribes that comprise the roughly 9,000 Gwich'in people who live in communities spanning northern Alaska and Canada's Northwest Territories and Yukon Territory.

The Gwich'in are known as "the caribou people" for the significance caribou play in their history, culture, and traditions. Caribou have provided the Gwich'in with food, shelter, clothes, and tools for thousands of years. Accordingly, the Gwich'in are keenly aware of the importance of the Alaskan coastal plain for the health of caribou populations: ANWR is the birthing grounds for the 200,000-plus Porcupine herd.

"The Gwich'in and the porcupine caribou herd have had a spiritual and cultural connection since time immemorial," Demientieff told Mongabay. "We migrated alongside them for over 40,000 years. Our communities and the migration route are nearly identical. Our ancestors settled us so we can continue to live and thrive off the land and animals."

"Our identity is non-negotiable; we will never sell our culture and our traditional lifestyle for any amount of money."

Stopping oil drilling in ANWR is one of only several things that Demientieff says needs to be done, including securing the area as a permanent, protected reserve and combating climate change, which is already having dramatic impacts on Gwich'in communities.

"We have seen changes not just within Gwich'in territory but within our coastal communities as well," she said. "Many are falling into the ocean. We have hunters falling through ice when the waters and lakes should be solid."

**"Analysis of a "Mixed Economy" in an Alaskan Native Settlement: The Case of Arctic Village," Steven C. Dinero, The Canadian Journal of Native Studies XXIII, 2003 [90] [https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Steven-Dinero/publication/237309856\\_ANALYSIS\\_OF\\_A\\_MIXED\\_ECONOMY\\_IN\\_AN\\_ALASKA](https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Steven-Dinero/publication/237309856_ANALYSIS_OF_A_MIXED_ECONOMY_IN_AN_ALASKA)**



Abstract:

In this paper, I analyze the mixed economy of the Nets'aii Gwich'in settlement of Arctic Village, Alaska. The economic structures of the Gwich'in began to undergo considerable change following Contact by Europeans in the 19th century. Today the Gwich'in possess several modern amenities, and are linked to the global capitalist economy.

Still, data collected in the village in 1999 provide cogent evidence that the priorities and values of the community remain centered upon the hunt and other subsistence activities. Cash income generated through wage labor or transfer payments is merely an additional means to perpetuate this activity. Thus, any assumptions that the Gwich'in are on the verge of abandoning this socioeconomic system for an urban-centric, wage labor-based system are at best, premature.

Current & Relevant Information:

Throughout Native Alaska today, hunters, gatherers and fishers continue to carry out subsistence economic activity at a very high level. The contribution which subsistence continues to make to the Alaskan Native economy has been described as "substantial," (Wolfe & Walker, 1987: 78) and for good reason. Food acquired off the land provides nearly half of that which is consumed in Native villages (Tuck & Huskey, 1986: 3). Moreover, subsistence harvests in Native Alaska have been found to be higher than the national average consumption of meat, fish and poultry combined (Wolfe & Walker, 1987:60). While the amount of food taken off the land is substantial in the Native community, however, its share comprises only about 5% of the total fish and game harvest taken in the state annually (Fall, 1990: 81)

**Concluding Thoughts**

Like that within much of Native Alaska, the economy of Arctic Village is mixed, combining traditional subsistence with cash-based wage labor and transfer payments. What is perhaps most disturbing about the evidence cited above is that wage labor opportunities in the town are limited at best, providing very few with adequate cash to fully supplement their subsistence activity.

While most residents have thus turned to transfer payments as an alternative cash source, which serves as an especially significant subsidy for caribou hunting activity, ATAP may in the future be threatened by the State's welfare reform initiatives. At present, the unemployment rate in the village is clearly too high for it to be affected by this reform agenda. Still, given that 51 % of those surveyed rely on some form of welfare while only 46% bring wage labor cash income into the village economy, some concern for the future may be in order.

Alaska's welfare reform program was reauthorized by Juneau in 2002. State officials working on the reform initiative since its inception in 1997 made no changes to the rule exempting residents of villages with unemployment rates above 500/0.

Depending upon the political climate that prevails in the years ahead, however, one can anticipate that "some money will be taken away (Kahklen, April 11, 2001).

Among the residents of Arctic Village, welfare is perhaps the most controversial issue now found in the community. As one 46-year-old male said:

Welfare [has] corrupted our managing our community, our personal self-sufficiency. It damaged our culture.... [As a result], we're more settled than our grandfathers. Only a few of us do subsistence.... My language is disappearing because of BIA welfare. We started getting welfare from the BIA in 1967 or somewhere around that time. That's when everything started to fall toward a western lifestyle, corrupting us from that time.

Lincoln Tritt, another strong critic of Native willingness to embrace the welfare system, addresses the issue with a story (August 18, 1999):

Years, ago, when they were building the oil pipeline, the workers used to throw sandwiches to a pack of wolves they encountered along the road.' When they finished the work [on the pipeline], they left. The wolves starved.

The point of this anecdote is of course clear, yet disturbing. For as the Nets'ail Gwich'in move toward such dependence on outside support systems rather than internal economic development, the Arctic Village economy may begin to rest on a rather shaky foundation indeed. One answer to this dilemma may be found in the now nascent development of eco-tourism in the community. While eco-tourism may help in addressing the cash flow concerns in the village, it simultaneously raises a whole new set of social difficulties as well. That said, the mixed economy of Arctic Village continues to allow the Nets'ail Gwich'in community to reproduce itself socially, economically, and culturally, and with subsistence clearly as its center. Outside threats to Gwich'in livelihood are ever present, including oil exploration initiatives in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge where the Porcupine caribou herd calves each year. And yet, the community has proven itself to be incredibly adaptable and resilient over the past several decades of contact with European America. One can only hope and assume that the Arctic Village economy will continue to adapt to the new realities brought on by 21st century economic globalization.

**“Cultural Safety in First Nations Inuit and Metis Public Health: Environmental Scan of Cultural Competency and Safety in Education, Training and Health Services,” L. Baba, National Collaborating Centre for Aboriginal Health, 2013 [91]**  
<https://www.ccsa-nccah.ca/docs/emerging/RPT-CulturalSafetyPublicHealth-Baba-EN.pdf>

## Overview:

First Nations, Inuit and Métis populations in Canada suffer from a variety of health disparities, including higher rates of infant mortality, higher rates of diabetes and other chronic diseases, greater prevalence of tuberculosis and other communicable diseases, as well as a shorter life expectancy compared to non-Aboriginal Canadians. Public health experts, community health workers and health care providers are trying to reduce Aboriginal health disparities through research, programs and services. As part of this effort, a group of researchers from Canada, Australia, New Zealand and the United States have proposed the development of a set of core competencies for Aboriginal public health. Together, they have established a collaboration called CIPHER: Competencies for Indigenous Public Health, Evaluation and Research.

The core competencies proposed by CIPHER would describe the skills, knowledge and attitudes a public health practitioner could utilize to provide culturally competent and safe health services to Aboriginal individuals and communities. Implementation of the core competencies in Aboriginal public health could lead to improvements in academic curriculum, training programs, professional certification, health services planning, health policy, and health program evaluation standards. Using the core competencies as standardized assessment criteria could also help governments and organizations share best practices more efficiently and promote culturally safe Aboriginal health services in all parts of the country.

The purpose of this environmental scan is to provide an overview of curriculum and initiatives implemented by governments, universities, and by Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal agencies and organizations to improve the cultural competency and safety of health professionals in their relations with First Nations, Inuit and Métis patients. There are seven substantive sections to this environmental scan. The first provides definitions for cultural awareness, cultural sensitivity, cultural competency and cultural safety. This is followed by a summary of core competencies for public health generally and for Aboriginal health specifically that have already been developed in Canada. Section 3 summarizes Aboriginal health and cultural competency curriculum in graduate public health, undergraduate medicine and undergraduate nursing education programs. Cultural safety curriculum and resources for Aboriginal students enrolled in these education programs are also mentioned. This is followed by an explanation of the United States' accreditation standards for graduate public health education programs and schools of public health. Section 5 summarizes professional training and continuing education programs that are available to public health professionals who wish to improve their knowledge of Aboriginal health issues, cultural competency or cultural safety. The Tripartite First Nations Health Plan in BC. and its implications for cultural safety in Aboriginal health services throughout British Columbia is the focus of Section 6, while the next section describes recent Health Canada projects that relate to

Aboriginal health service improvement, cultural competency and cultural safety practices. The report concludes with a summary of how the information from this environmental scan can be utilized to develop national core competencies in Aboriginal health, pointing out innovative ideas, challenges, and topics that warrant further discussion.

Information for this environmental scan was collected from web pages, fact sheets, reports, publications and other gray literature resources that are freely available to the public. Information sources include:

- University websites
- Government agency websites (e.g., Health Canada)
- Professional association websites (e.g., Indigenous Physicians Association of Canada)
- Aboriginal health advocacy/ organization websites (e.g., NAHO)

This environmental scan is not a systematic review of the literature, nor is it a comprehensive report on cultural competency, cultural safety, or First Nations, Inuit and Métis health. It is intended to inform students, researchers, practitioners, community leaders and the public about cultural competency and safety in Aboriginal public health and health services. As such, the environmental scan highlights a range of topics related to the CIPHER project and cultural competency and safety, and should not be interpreted as an exhaustive report or an article on systematic research.

It is important for the reader to note the differences between the educational programs discussed in Section 3 of the report. The environmental scan focuses on the basic, professional-level education programs that are available for health professionals in public health, medicine and nursing. These degree programs include graduate level Master of Public Health degrees, undergraduate level medical (MD) education and undergraduate level Bachelor of Nursing degrees. These programs were chosen as the focus because they include the basic curriculum that students are required to complete before beginning their professional careers in public health, medicine and nursing. Higher level educational programs were not included because not all students pursue additional education before becoming health professionals. Please keep these distinctions in mind while reading the report.

Overall, the environmental scan describes widespread efforts to address the unique health needs of First Nations, Inuit and Métis communities. However, without standardized assessment criteria, it is difficult to evaluate these education, training and health service programs. Developing and implementing a set of national core competencies for Aboriginal public health may be an appropriate next step in evaluating these programs, improving them, and creating a competent workforce that can provide culturally competent and safe health services to First Nations, Inuit

and Métis peoples throughout Canada. The aim of the CIPHER collaboration is to explore this potential next step.

#### Current & Relevant Information:

### **Conclusion**

The environmental scan describes a variety of programs and projects that are trying to address the unique health needs of First Nations, Inuit and Métis communities and prepare public health professionals to provide culturally safe health services to Aboriginal people. To further develop and improve cultural safety education, training and practices in Aboriginal public health, standardized assessment criteria are needed. A national set of core competencies for Aboriginal public health could address this need. The goal of the CIPHER collaboration is to explore the potential implementation of such a set of core competencies, and to promote the development of a culturally safe public health workforce that can appropriately and effectively address the needs of First Nation, Inuit and Métis communities throughout Canada. However, before the project can move forward, the potential development of core competencies for Aboriginal cultural safety needs to be further discussed amongst Aboriginal scholars, community representatives, public health experts, health care educators and policy makers. Some questions and topics for discussion that are raised by the findings of the environmental scan are listed below.

#### *Questions to Consider in Developing Core Competencies for Aboriginal Public Health*

- Which resource(s), which organization(s), and which individuals could be utilized as guidelines for the development of national core competencies for cultural safety in Aboriginal public health?
- In addition to the national core competencies, should there be an accreditation process for graduate-level public health (MPH) education programs that offer a concentration curriculum in Aboriginal health? What organization should administrate accreditation? What should the accreditation criteria consist of in terms of program structure, curriculum, practicum, etc.?
- Should there be a standardized professional examination developed for public health professionals to earn the professional designation, such as Certified Aboriginal Health Specialist, which would affirm a practitioner's knowledge of cultural safety concepts and practices?
- How could a set of national core competencies for cultural safety in Aboriginal public health be implemented through policy changes, health service mandates and service provider practices?

#### *Observations and Topics for Discussion Raised by the Environmental Scan*

**Developing Core Competencies:** There are a number of core competency publications, educational programs, and health service projects that could be utilized

as resources for any group of public health and Aboriginal health experts who endeavor to develop a set of national core competencies for Aboriginal public health. The authors of the publications, the administrators of the education programs, and the practitioners involved in the health service projects could be consulted on what to include in the core competencies for cultural safety in Aboriginal public health.

**Establishing Aboriginal Public Health Curriculum Standards:** In public health, medicine, and nursing, there are a handful of education programs with unique ideas for Aboriginal health and cultural safety curriculum and training. For example, there are a number of courses currently taught in various universities that address significant topics related to Aboriginal cultural safety in health services. These could be used to develop a list of required content that must be addressed in the curriculum of accredited Aboriginal public health courses. There are also some medical clerkships in Aboriginal communities for undergraduate medical students. These could be used as inspiration for a public health practicum, where Aboriginal public health programs could require students to work with Aboriginal communities on local health issues, although it would be important that these projects focus on community-identified health needs. Overall, curriculum standards for Aboriginal public health education would need to be discussed before the potential implementation of core competencies for cultural safety in Aboriginal public health.

**Professional Certification for Aboriginal Public Health Specialists:** There are already a variety of continuing education and professional training programs available to public health professionals who work in Aboriginal health. The rigor of these programs varies: some education modules are available online for free, while other programs require participants to complete multiple courses, projects, and in-person discussions. In addition, some programs award certificates or continuing education credit upon completion of the curriculum. The core competencies for cultural safety in Aboriginal public health could be used as assessment criteria for these continuing education and professional training opportunities. Alternatively, a certification process for Aboriginal public health specialists could be developed. These options need to be discussed when developing and implementing the core competencies for cultural safety in Aboriginal public health.

**Translating Education and Training into Practice:** Although there are education programs and training modules on Aboriginal health and cultural safety, these resources do not guarantee real changes in practice in public health and the health care system. Education and training may or may not teach students how to implement Aboriginal cultural safety practices and establish cultural safety norms in health service organizations. Managerial level staff may not support the time and effort that must be invested in establishing culturally safe practices. Furthermore, cultural safety practices may not be mandated by health care organizations, health authorities, provincial governments or the federal government. The development process for the core competencies in cultural safety must address how the core

competencies could be implemented in Aboriginal health service settings to promote cultural safety.

**“Gwich'in Human Rights Threatened by ANWR Drilling,” Cultural Survival, 24 October 2005 [92] <https://www.culturalsurvival.org/news/gwichin-human-rights-threatened-anwr-drilling>**

Overview:

The Gwich'in Steering Committee announced on October 25, 2005, the release of a new report outlining the implications of drilling in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge (ANWR) as a violation of Gwich'in human rights under international law.

A Moral Choice for the United States—The Human Rights Implications for the Gwich'in of Drilling in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge was prepared by the public interest law firm Trustees for Alaska, on behalf of and under the auspices of the Episcopal Church, the Gwich'in Nation, and Professor Richard J. Wilson, Director of the International Human Rights Law Clinic at American University.

Current & Relevant Information:

Oil drilling in the ANWR would jeopardize the culture of the Gwich'in, Legal Director of the Trustees for Alaska Rebecca Bernard said during a press conference about the report on the day of the report's release. She emphasized that the coastal plains of Alaska, the planned drilling site, are critical to the Porcupine Caribou Herd, essential to the Gwich'in way of life.

Bernard said that the United States is obligated under several international bodies to protect the plains. The report cites the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, the Charter of the OAS, the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights, and the UN Human Rights Committee support the Gwich'in rights to culture, their own means of subsistence, health, and religion.

On October 19, 2005, the US Senate Energy Committee voted 13-9 to open the land for oil drilling as part of the energy panel's ANWR drilling provision, which paved the way for subsequent passage of the bill through the House Resources and Senate Budget committee. The bill will now go before Congress in early November.

Oil drilling has been rolled into the budget bill rather than being categorized as an energy bill because it will allegedly serve as a way to raise funds, lessen United States' dependence on international oil, and create jobs, according to the Washington Post. Language used in the budget bill has made it impossible for opponents to block the legislation with a filibuster.

J. Inuit (Inuvialuit/Kalaallit/Inupiat) [Canada/Denmark-Greenland/US-Alaska]:

**“Inuit People of the World,” Indigenous Corporate Training Inc., 17 April 2012 [93] <https://www.ictinc.ca/blog/inuit-people-of-the-world>**



### Overview:

The Inuit people of the world are a group of culturally similar Indigenous Peoples who live in the Arctic regions of Canada, Denmark, Russia and the United States.

### Current & Relevant Information:

In Canada, the Inuit primarily live in Nunavut, the northern third of Quebec, the coastal region of Labrador, and in pockets in the Northwest Territories (primarily on the coast of the Arctic Ocean), and formerly in the Yukon. These areas are collectively referred to as Inuit Nunangat. The Inuit People were recognized in the Constitution Act of 1982 as a distinctive group of Canadian Aboriginals who are neither First Nations nor Métis.

The constituency of the Inuit Circumpolar Council, a United Nations recognized organization, includes Canada's Inuit and Inuvialuit (Inuit People who live in the western Canadian Arctic region), Greenland's Kalaallit Inuit, Alaska's Inupiat and Yup'ik People and the Siberian Yupik People.

As an aside to your interest in knowing more about the Inuit, be aware that the Yupik People of Alaska and Siberia do not consider themselves to be Inuit and prefer to be known as the Yup'ik, Yupiit or Eskimo, whereas in Canada and Greenland, the term "Eskimo" is considered derogatory.

**"Eskimo," New World Encyclopedia [94]**  
<https://www.newworldencyclopedia.org/entry/Eskimo>

### Overview:

Eskimos or Esquimaux is a term referring to aboriginal people who, together with the related Aleuts, inhabit the circumpolar region, excluding Scandinavia and most of Russia, but including the easternmost portions of Siberia. They are culturally and biologically distinguishable from other Native Americans in the United States and Canada. There are two main groups of Eskimos: the Inuit of northern Alaska, Canada, and Greenland, and the Yupik, comprising speakers of four distinct Yupik languages and originating in western Alaska, in South Central Alaska along the Gulf of Alaska coast, and in the Russian Far East. The term "Eskimo" is not acceptable to those of Canada, who prefer Inuit or those of Greenland who refer to themselves as Kalaallit; however, these terms are not appropriate for the Yupik, whose language and ethnicity is distinct from the Inuit. The Aleut culture developed separately from the Inuit around 4,000 years ago.

Although spread over a vast geographical area, there are many commonalities among the different Inuit and Yupik groups. Of particular note are their shamanistic beliefs and practices, although these have all but died out in recent times. Contemporary Eskimo generally live in settled communities with modern technology and houses instead of the traditional igloos, and have come to accept employment

and other changes to their lifestyle although they continue to be self-sufficient through their hunting and fishing. The harsh climate still determines much about their lives, and they must maintain a balance between those traditions that have supported them well for generations and changes brought through contact with other cultures.

#### Current & Relevant Information:

##### **Terminology**

The term Eskimo is broadly inclusive of the two major groups, the Inuit—including the Kalaallit (Greenlanders) of Greenland, Inuit and Inuinnait of Canada, and Inupiat of northern Alaska—and the Yupik peoples—the Naukan of Siberia, the Yupik of Siberia in Russia and St. Lawrence Island in Alaska, the Yup'ik of Alaska, and the Alutiiq (Sug'piak or Pacific Eskimo) of southcentral Alaska. The anthropologist Thomas Huxley in *On the Methods and Results of Ethnology* (1865) defined the "Esquimaux race" to be the indigenous peoples in the Arctic region of northern Canada and Alaska. He described them to "certainly present a new stock" (different from the other indigenous peoples of North America). He described them to have straight black hair, dull skin complexion, short and squat, with high cheek bones and long skulls.

However, in Canada and Greenland, Eskimo is widely considered pejorative and offensive, and has been replaced overall by Inuit. The preferred term in Canada's Central Arctic is Inuinnait, and in the eastern Canadian Arctic Inuit. The language is often called Inuktitut, though other local designations are also used. The Inuit of Greenland refer to themselves as Greenlanders or, in their own language, Kalaallit, and to their language as Greenlandic or Kalaallisut.

Because of the linguistic, ethnic, and cultural differences between Yupik and Inuit languages and peoples, there is still uncertainty as to what term encompassing all Yupik and Inuit people will be acceptable to all. There has been some movement to use Inuit as a term encompassing all peoples formerly described as Eskimo, Inuit and Yupik alike. Strictly speaking, however, Inuit does not refer to the Yupik peoples or languages of Alaska and Siberia. This is because the Yupik languages are linguistically distinct from the Inupiaq and other Inuit languages, and the peoples are ethnically and culturally distinct as well. The word Inuit does not occur in the Yupik languages of Alaska and Siberia.

**“The Inuit Case Study,” Ana Nunez, Human Rights and Climate Change [95]**

[https://www.ciel.org/Publications/Inuit\\_CaseStudy\\_Sep07.pdf](https://www.ciel.org/Publications/Inuit_CaseStudy_Sep07.pdf)

#### Overview:

The Inuit, indigenous people inhabiting the Arctic region of Canada, Alaska, Greenland and Russia, share a unique heritage, culture, and homeland. Transported by dog teams, finding temporary shelter in igloos, and warming up with furry karpas,

Inuit inhabit one of the most isolated and harsh lands on Earth. The warming of temperatures over the last 30 years has resulted in major changes to their ancestral land and consequently, their livelihoods. United into a major human rights movement with wide international support, the Inuit are currently fighting to defend their right to live and conserve a land that is literally melting under their feet.

#### Current & Relevant Information:

##### **The Inuit**

The more than 155,000 Inuit people located in the Northern Polar Region have successfully managed to balance their traditional practices and modern life. The economy of the region is based largely on natural resources, from oil and gas to fish, caribou, and whales. Tourism is also a growing source of income and the public sector, including the military, employs a wide part of the population in the area.

In addition to the cash economy, traditional subsistence through hunting and fishing represents a main source of income for the Inuit and contributes greatly to their overall well-being.

**“Crossroads of Continents and Modern Boundaries: An Introduction to Inuit and Chukchi Experiences in the Bering Strait, Beaufort Sea, and Baffin Bay,” Henry P. Huntington, et al., MDPI, 24 June 2020 [96]**

<https://www.google.com/url?sa=t&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&source=web&cd=&ved=2ahUKEwi4kbPGloPxAhWRPM0KHeaACjkQFjAGegQIBhAE&url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.mdpi.com%2F2073-4441%2F12%2F6%2F1808%2Fpdf&usg=AOvVaw19w5aRDOW5-cTJd-0aRpu6>

#### Abstract:

The homeland of Inuit extends from Asia and the Bering Sea to Greenland and the Atlantic Ocean. Inuit and their Chukchi neighbors have always been highly mobile, but the imposition of three international borders in the region constrained travel, trade, hunting, and resource stewardship among neighboring groups. Colonization, assimilation, and enforcement of national laws further separated those even from the same family. In recent decades, Inuit and Chukchi have re-established many ties across those boundaries, making it easier to travel and trade with one another and to create new institutions of environmental management. To introduce Indigenous perspectives into the discussion of transboundary maritime water connections in the Arctic, this paper presents personal descriptions of what those connections mean to people who live and work along and across each of the national frontiers within the region: Russia–U.S., U.S.–Canada, and Canada–Greenland. Some of these connections have been made in cooperation with national governments, some in the absence of government activity, and some despite opposition from national governments. In all cases, the shared culture of the region has provided a common

foundation for a shared vision and commitment to cooperation and the resumption of Indigenous self-determination within their homelands.

#### Current & Relevant Information:

##### **Introduction**

Inuit are predominantly a maritime people whose homeland reaches from the Asian coast of the Bering and Chukchi seas across the northern waters of North America to the Atlantic shores of eastern Greenland. Some of their Asian neighbors, the Chukchi, also hunt and fish in the sea, extending the boundaries of shared cultural practices. From time immemorial, Inuit and Chukchi have traveled on water and ice throughout this region, to hunt, fish, socialize, and trade.

Their interactions have included neighboring peoples such as Koryak, Athabaskan, Aleut, Dene, Cree, and Innu. Inuit themselves comprise several distinctive language groups, including Yup'ik, Cupik, Siberian Yupik, Iñupiaq, Inuvialuit, Inuit, Inughuit, Kalaallit, Tunumiut, and others. These groups share a common language family as well as maritime hunting practices and a high degree of mobility on land and sea. The Chukchi include maritime hunters as well as inland reindeer herders, an unusual combination in the Arctic part of Russia.

#### Social Issues:

**“Effects of Global Ecological Change on Arctic Council Permanent Participants,” Erica Dingman, et al., German Institute of Development and Sustainability, 2014**

[97] <https://www.idos-research.de/en/others-publications/article/effects-of-global-ecological-change-on-arctic-council-permanent-participants/>

##### Overview:

Northern communities are highly vulnerable to Global Ecological Change (GEC): The Arctic is known as the region experiencing climate change twice as fast as other world regions. Arctic communities need to adapt to environmental changes caused by sea ice melt, natural changes such as variations in population and migration of wildlife, and contaminants in traditional foods. The new accessibility of Arctic regions has also opened up new economic opportunities (mining, oil and gas exploration, tourism and shipping), which pose additional environmental risks.

In the Arctic Council, an intergovernmental forum formed by the Arctic-rim states in 1996 to improve cooperation with regard to climate protection and security and to enhance the relation between Arctic-states and the indigenous peoples living in the Arctic, six indigenous peoples organizations have status of Permanent Participants: The Aleut International Association (AIA), the Arctic Athabaskan Council (AAC), the Gwich'in Council International (GCI), the Inuit Circumpolar Council (ICC), the Russian Association of Indigenous Peoples of the North (RAIPON) and the Saami Council (SC). Although they do not have voting (but consultation) rights, they

represent 500,000 indigenous peoples living in the Arctic regions of Russia, Norway, Finland, Sweden, Denmark (Greenland), Canada, Iceland and the U.S at Arctic Council meetings and are recognized as full participants in all Arctic Council working groups. Although the ability of each community to cope and to adapt to GEC differs depending on the regional location and community setting, all of them need to respond in particular to the changes caused by humans in the Arctic. Through the indigenous people organizations, they address the Arctic Council member-states to consider their positions. The following papers provide an overview on their positions on tourism, resource extraction and shipping in the Arctic region as can be found in the policy- and strategy papers of the six Permanent Participants to the Arctic Council.

#### Current & Relevant Information:

#### **Inuit Circumpolar Council (ICC) - Linda Jabs**

Established in 1977, the Inuit Circumpolar Council (ICC) is an international nongovernment organization that is one of six Permanent Participants of the Arctic Council. The ICC represents approximately 150,000 Inuit living in settlements and homelands in Alaska, Canada, Greenland and Chukotka (Russia) that are jointly referred to as the Inuit Nunaat. Through the ICC, the Inuit have come together to speak with one voice on common issues and to actively assert their rights as policy-makers and decision-makers affecting the Inuit Nunaat, particularly those decisions regarding resource development. The Charter and By-laws of the ICC set out the composition of the ICC, which consists of a general assembly that is to meet at least once every 4 years and an Executive Council that ensures the operation of the ICC between meetings of the General Assembly.

For millennia the Inuit have endured in Inuit Nunaat and have adapted to changes and challenges in order to ensure the health and well-being of their communities. The movement of the sea and sea ice are integral components of that adaptation, therefore any action or intervention that affects the sea and the land must protect the environment and wildlife so that they can continue to endure for millennia to come. The Inuit do not make distinctions between the land and the sea and their definition is "Land is anywhere our feet, dog teams, or snowmobiles can take us."

The pace of change in Inuit Nunaat is coming at a rapid rate and is being driven primarily by changes in the Arctic environment. While there are acknowledged opportunities for economic growth in shipping, resource extraction and tourism in the Arctic and for the Inuit, there are also consequences for the environment and the Inuit way of life. For the Inuit, it is imperative that a balance be struck between both renewable and non-renewable resources and the economic, social and cultural benefits that can be derived from both categories of resources while at the same time forestalling environmental degradation.

There are two defining ICC Declarations that each set out the principles under which the ICC will operate and conduct business with the Arctic States and international parties. The first is the “Circumpolar Inuit Declaration on Sovereignty In The Arctic” ratified in April 2009, which sets out the foundations for action by the Inuit and the Arctic States to chart the future of the Arctic. The second is the “Circumpolar Inuit Declaration on Resource Development Principles in Inuit Nunaat,” passed in May 2011, which sets out the principles under which the governance, management, development or use of resources will occur in the Arctic. Both Declarations use strong and prescriptive language as to the approach and expectations of the Inuit with respect to engagement on issues.

The ICC Declaration on Resource Development Principles is the definitive document outlining resource development in Inuit Nunaat regardless of whether or not the resource development involves renewable resources, which are the historical basis for the Inuit culture and future generations, or non-renewable resources which are seen as a means to enhance the living and social conditions of the Inuit. There currently does not seem to be any distinction made between resource development, tourism or shipping by the ICC.

Any and all interactions must be conducted with openness and transparency and respect the rights of the Inuit as grounded in the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. Resource development must also be grounded in the Circumpolar Inuit Declaration on Sovereignty in the Arctic and include the Inuit as active and equal partners in developing policies and decision-making that affect Inuit Nunaat. An integral component of this partnership must be the active inclusion and engagement of the local communities that will be impacted by the resource development.

Any resource development must contribute to rather than detract from any regional, national or international initiatives to curb greenhouse emissions and must not exacerbate any climate change-related stresses on the survival of Arctic wildlife. Human needs must be at the center of any resource development and must promote the physical and mental health of Inuit communities and individuals as well as Inuit food security. Resource development must sustainably service the needs of the Inuit today and demonstrate support for affected communities without compromising the ability of the Inuit to meet the needs of tomorrow. Land use planning, management and impact assessments must consider the cumulative impacts of current and proposed future projects and where prudent, limit the number and scope of projects.

Active monitoring of vessel traffic and specific plans regarding any oil spill cleanup and containment must be based on the highest technological standards and practices currently available. Minimum standards will respect the Arctic Council's “Arctic Offshore Oil and Gas Guidelines.”

Inuit also expect that any resource development will result in an improvement in their material well-being and be well-rooted in any international indigenous and human rights laws. Any projects must be planned and implemented in such a way that they support and enhance rather than overwhelm Inuit culture. The Inuit will also be given opportunity to learn and develop the technological skills and training and business management that are needed by the Inuit.

Going forward, some of the critical factors under consideration by the ICC are contained in the Kitigaaryit Declaration, which was ratified at the General Assembly held in Inuvik July 21-24, 2014, continue to be resource development, the ongoing priority of Inuit health and well-being, and on-going efforts to include Inuit in all bilateral and multilateral meetings of importance to the Inuit.

**“Three lifestyle-related issues of major significance for public health among the Inuit in contemporary Greenland: a review of adverse childhood conditions, obesity, and smoking in a period of social transition,” Peter Bjerregaard and Christina V. L. Larsen, Public Health Reviews, 16 April 2018 [98]**

<https://publichealthreviews.biomedcentral.com/articles/10.1186/s40985-018-0085-8>

#### Abstract:

Greenland is a country in transition from a colonial past with subsistence hunting and fishing to an urban Nordic welfare state. Epidemiological transition from infectious to chronic diseases has been evident since the 1950s. Ninety percent of the population is Inuit.

We studied three public health issues based on published literature, namely adverse childhood experiences, addictive behavior, and suicide; diet and obesity; and smoking. Alcohol consumption was high in the 1970s and 1980s with accompanying family and social disruption. This is still a cause of poor mental health and suicides in the generations most affected. The diet is changing from a traditional diet of fish and marine mammals to imported food including food items rich in sugar and fat from domestic animals, and the level of physical activity is decreasing with an ensuing epidemic rise in obesity. The prevalence of smoking is high at around 60% among both men and women and is only slowly decreasing. Smoking shows large social variation, and tobacco-related diseases are widespread.

The diseases and conditions outlined above all contribute towards a low life expectancy at birth—69 years for men and 74 years for women in 2011–2015—compared with 78 and 84 years for men and women, respectively, on average in the European countries. The translation of government public health programs into local activities needs strengthening, and it must be realized that the improvement of public health is a long-term process.

#### Current & Relevant Information:

##### **Background**



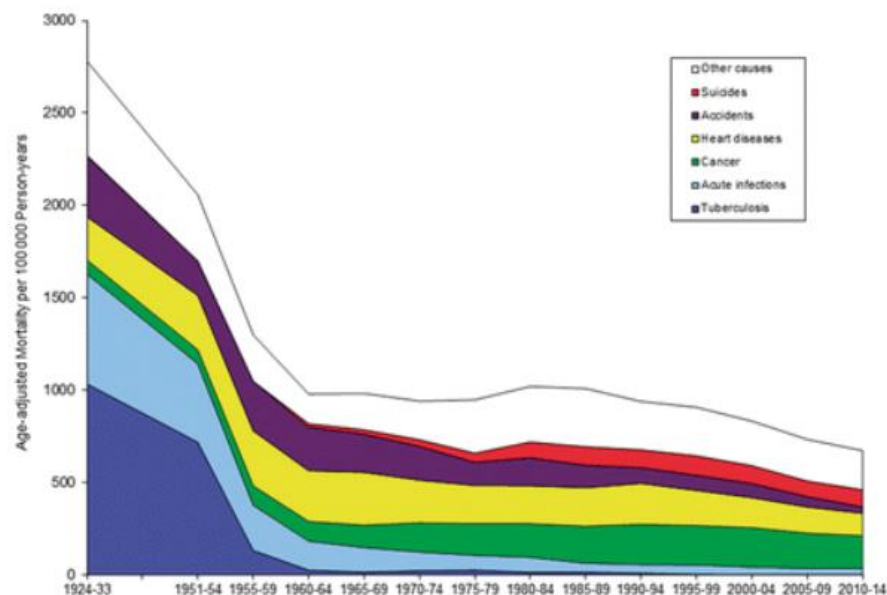
Greenland is a self-governing part of the Kingdom of Denmark with a majority population of Inuit (ca. 90%). The traditional livelihood of the Inuit was the hunting of marine mammals, seals in particular, which necessitated a decentralized settlement pattern. Due to a warming of ocean temperatures in the beginning of the twentieth century, vast shoals of cod found their way to the coastal waters of Greenland and a transition towards commercial fishing, cash economy, and increased urbanization started. After WWII, time was ripe for political change and a reform commission was established by the Danish government, the G-50 Commission. G-50 suggested several changes among which were the further development of a commercial fishing industry and support of the already ongoing centralization of the population. In 1953, the former colony became an integral part of Denmark. During the post-colonial years, profound changes took place in Greenland. The population increased from 24,000 to 56,000 in 2017, and the movement from villages to towns continued. While in 1950, 50% of the population lived in villages; this proportion had decreased to 13% in 2017. Modern houses with running water and bathrooms were built to replace the traditional crowded stone-and-turf houses. Hospitals were built in all towns. Alcohol consumption increased and peaked in 1982 and 1987 with an average consumption of the equivalent of 22 l pure alcohol per adult per year. Greenland became connected internally and to the outside world by commercial airlines and telephone, and in 1992, the introduction of real-time TV further integrated Greenland in the world community. Widespread availability of Internet has improved participation in the global community although the cost of data traffic is still prohibitively high. After G-50, the proportion of migrant workers from Denmark increased from 4 to 19% in 1975. It is now down to 11%.

In 2017, the population of Greenland numbered 55,860 of which 90% were born in Greenland and 10% were born outside Greenland, mostly in Denmark. Place of birth is a proxy for ethnicity used by Statistics Greenland and other agencies; for adults living in Greenland, this is a rough but useful estimate of ethnicity as Greenlanders (Inuit) or Danes. Kalaallissut, an Inuit language, is the vernacular spoken by virtually all Greenland Inuit, while Danish is the major second language, spoken by a substantial proportion although far from all.

Based on information from Bertelsen, the annual reports of the Chief Medical Officer, and the Greenland Registry of Causes of Death, Fig. 2 gives an overview of causes of death in the Inuit population of Greenland since 1924, reflecting the epidemiological transition that the Inuit in Greenland have undergone.

## Fig. 2

From: Three lifestyle-related issues of major significance for public health among the Inuit in contemporary Greenland: a review of adverse childhood conditions, obesity, and smoking in a period of social transition



Mortality from selected causes in Greenland 1924–2014. Adjusted for age and sex.  
Updated from [5, 7]

Mortality from tuberculosis and acute infectious diseases declined significantly until the 1960s and are now negligible as causes of death. Since 1960, a decrease in mortality from infectious diseases, heart diseases, and accidents has been balanced by an increase in mortality from cancer and suicides. Life expectancy at birth increased from 63 years in 1977–1981 to 71 years in 2011–2015. It is considerably lower than in Denmark and most European countries but higher than among many other indigenous and tribal peoples.

A number of population health surveys as well as public health documents by the Greenland Government have identified alcohol, tobacco, and obesity as main risk factors. The purpose of the paper is to discuss the prevalence trends for these risk factors in post-colonial Greenland and their impact on public health.

**“Despite self-governing, Inuit still suffer social and health problems,” Anne Ringgaard, ScienceNordic, 11 July 2016 [99] <https://sciencenordic.com/denmark-greenland-science-special-society/despite-self-governing-inuit-still-suffer-social-and-health-problems/1434945>**

### Abstract:

The Greenlandic Inuit, Australian Aboriginals, the Mayans of Central America, the Igorot of Asia, and the Swedish Sami, are among the 370 million indigenous peoples in the world, according to the UN.

They all look different to one another, and have a different history and traditions, but all of them have at some point been deprived of influence over their country by a foreign power.

Many of the 5,000 different indigenous groups around the world are fighting for the right to self-determination in their own region. And some are casting a long, envious look at Greenland's home rule.

"Other indigenous peoples--including Inuit in Canada and Alaska--think that the autonomy that we have in Greenland, is highly sought after," says Birger Poppel, who studies the social and living conditions in the Arctic at the University of Greenland (Ilisimatusarfik), Nuuk.

### Current & Relevant Information:

#### **Native people have their own problems**

Even though Greenland has home rule, the Inuit community still suffer many of the same health and social problems as other remote indigenous people around the world.

These are the conclusions of a study, recently published in the medical journal The Lancet.

The study is the first to compare the health and social conditions of 28 groups of indigenous people with 'non-indigenous' people.

And it does not make for encouraging reading.

Indigenous people represent five percent of the world population, and 15 per cent of the world's poor. 89 per cent of Greenland's population are indigenous.

Indigenous people come from a range of different cultures, and are hard to define as a single group.

They discovered that when compared to non-indigenous people, indigenous communities have a lower life expectancy, higher infant mortality, an increased number of newborns with abnormal birth weight, more women who die in childbirth, more obese adults and children, a lower level of education, and worse economic conditions.

**"Inuit Youth in a Changing World," Richard G. Condon, Cultural Survival, 22 February 2010 [100] <https://www.culturalsurvival.org/publications/cultural-survival-quarterly/inuit-youth-changing-world>**

### Overview:

The rapid social changes that have taken place in the Canadian Arctic over the past 20 to 30 years have created a host of challenges and dilemmas for young Inuit. The members of this younger generation are coming of age during a period of fundamental change in northern society. A previously nomadic population has been concentrated into centralized settlements and towns, resulting in population growth and increased economic security. More Inuit are exposed to southern values through travel, schooling, television and radio. Because of all these changes, young people have grown not only more autonomous but have been able to delay the acceptance of adult roles and responsibilities. As a result, the patterning and sequencing of traditional Inuit life stages has altered significantly, creating a prolonged adolescent life stage that has up until now been absent in Inuit tradition.

Few regions of the world have experienced such a rapid pace of development and change as the Canadian Arctic. Recognition of the strategic significance and resource potential of Canada's arctic regions has led to an increase in government and corporate involvement with the North and its residents. Such involvement has had both positive and negative consequences for young Inuit. On the positive side, the economy is more secure and schooling and advanced vocational training are more available, creating opportunities for young people that did not exist just 10 to 20 years ago. On the negative side, however, young people face the significant social and psychological stresses incurred by rapid social change, as they strive to find a place in this newly emerging social order. Many young people lack sufficient employment opportunities, are inadequately prepared for advanced high schooling and are unwilling or unable to relocate to larger northern communities where jobs are more available. These adjustment dilemmas have contributed, in part, to the high rates of alcohol and drug abuse, suicide and juvenile delinquency which are characteristic of Inuit teenagers and young adults throughout the North.

### Current & Relevant Information:

The world of today's Copper Inuit youth is markedly different from that of their parents and grandparents. In the past, young people not only made a rapid transition into adulthood, but faced predetermined roles and responsibilities imposed by the demands of a harsh and unproductive habitat. The Copper Inuit of the Holman region occupied one of the most marginal environments within Canada's Arctic. Gender roles were narrowly defined, and options were extremely limited. A young man could aspire only to be a skilled hunter and provider for his family; a woman could strive to acquire the skills necessary to be an expert seamstress and household manager. Gender roles were learned through observation of and intense interaction with parents and other adult relatives. Because residential units were small and infant mortality rates high, young people had no peers to draw them away from the socializing influence of their parents.

In the past, parents made marriage arrangements, especially for young women, when the child was an infant, and in some cases even before a child's birth. Parentally arranged marriage and child betrothal were most adaptive in a society in which prospective spouses were few and far between and in which female infanticide reduced the number of marriageable females. As a result, parents sought marriage partners for their offspring through kinship and alliance networks. Most young women married at or just before their first menstrual period, and began bearing children three to four years later.

Young men, however, faced a different set of requirements. They were not considered old enough for marriage until they had proven themselves capable as hunters and providers. Until a man could develop the skills and strength necessary to build a snow-house or hunt large game unassisted, he was not considered mature enough to take on and support a wife. In chronological terms, he would not reach marriageability until around 17 or 18 years of age. He then went through a period of bride service, during which he joined his future father-in-law's household, often while his betrothed was still pubescent. During this trial marriage period, the young man worked with his father-in-law for three to four years until the young couple was considered mature enough to establish a separate household.

The rather rapid transition from childhood to adulthood in traditional Copper Inuit society stands in marked contrast to the situation today. In the past, Inuit teenagers were raised exclusively within the context of small family groups and spent much of the year in isolated hunting/fishing/trapping camps where there were few, if any, activities to distract them from participating fully in assigned chores. Today, a large adolescent peer group dominates the recreational activities of teens. Young people now have a great deal more autonomy than they ever had in the pre-settlement era. When they are not in school, they pass much of their time with their peers, more often than not engaged in social rather than work activities. The increased economic security of contemporary settlement life now makes it possible for teenagers to delay taking on the roles and responsibilities of adulthood. As a result, young people now make their own decisions concerning when and who to marry, often only consulting minimally with their parents.

**“Canada: Inuit,” Minority Rights Group International [101]**

<https://minorityrights.org/minorities/inuit/>

#### Overview:

The 2001 Canadian Census reported 56,330 Inuit living in Canada – 22,560 in Nunavut, 3,910 in the Northwest Territories, 9,530 in Quebec and 4,560 in Newfoundland and Labrador. There are smaller Inuit populations in Alberta, Ontario and British Columbia. Other Inuit communities survive in Siberian Russia, Greenland and the US state of Alaska.

The Inuit live in 53 Arctic communities in four geographic regions: Nunatsiavut (Labrador); Nunavik (Quebec); Nunavut; and the Inuvialuit Settlement Region of the Northwest Territories.

Two of Canada's northern territories give official status to Inuit and other indigenous languages. In Nunavut, Inuktitut and Inuinnaqtun are official languages alongside English and French, and Inuktitut is a common vehicular language in government. In the Northwest Territories, there are 11 official languages: Dene Suline, Cree, English, French, Gwich'in, Inuinnaqtun, Inuktitut, Inuvialuktun, North Slavey, South Slavey and Tâchô.

#### Current & Relevant Information:

##### **Current issues**

A new Partnership Accord was agreed between the Government of Canada and the representative body of the Inuit, the Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami, in May 2005. The Partnership Accord foresees the negotiation of a 'Government of Canada-Inuit Action Plan' to be drafted by 2006. Implementation of this Action Plan will be monitored and evaluated by a joint steering committee comprised of two senior officials from the Department of Indian and Northern Affairs, and from Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami. The Partnership Accord is political in nature, and begins by acknowledging the constitutional recognition of Inuit as an Aboriginal people of Canada, living in Nunatsiavut (Labrador), Nunavik, Nunavut, the Inuvialuit Settlement Region and many centers in southern Canada.

The housing crisis remains a critical issue for the Inuit, and leaders are requesting that the Government of Canada act immediately to address the housing crisis in an Inuit-specific way. They seek clear, concrete commitments to ensure new houses can be built. The Government of Nunavut plans to use C\$11.25 million to build 100 new homes by 2007. The funds come from a C\$200 million Northern Housing Trust approved by the Government of Canada.

On 1 December 2005, the Nunatsiavut government came into being, marking the last of the Inuit land claims agreements to be negotiated in Canada. The Labrador Inuit Association (LIA) signed a land claims agreement with officials of the federal and provincial government on behalf of Labrador's 5,000 Inuit people in January 2005. The Premier of Newfoundland and Labrador, Danny Williams, also formally apologized for the forced resettlement of some Inuit during the 1950s.

The LIA filed its original land claim in 1977. The Labrador Inuit Land Claims Agreement (LILCA) paves the way for an autonomous government in Nunatsiavut, covering 72,520 sq km of northern Labrador. The Inuit will become the owners of 15,800 sq km of land – 2 per cent of Labrador's land mass – and they will co-manage the remaining area. The Inuit also will have special rights along the coast to 44,030 sq km of sea. More than three-quarters of Labrador's eligible Inuit voted to

ratify the agreement in a referendum held in 2004. The land claim agreement gives members of the LIA land, mineral and marine rights, C\$130 million in compensation, provincial royalties from resource development, and another C\$120 million to establish self-government. The Inuit will gain the right to control health, education and justice in five communities.

At the end of 2005, the ICC submitted a communication to the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights claiming that the US failure to control emissions of greenhouse gases is damaging Inuit livelihoods in the Arctic. The communication was filed on behalf of the ICC by the Center for International Environmental Law (CIEL). The communication asks the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights to investigate the harm caused to Inuit by global warming, and to declare the US 'in violation of rights affirmed in the 1948 American Declaration of the Rights and Duties of Man and other instruments of international law'. The US is not party to the Inter-American Convention on Human Rights.

Inuit leaders have said they oppose and seek clarification of the decision announced on 2 May 2006 by The World Conservation Union (IUCN) to upgrade the status of the polar bear to 'vulnerable' on the Red List. It is felt that to upgrade the polar bear's status to 'vulnerable' at this time, while populations remain robust, unacceptably exaggerates the situation. Inuit leaders, members of the IUCN, reported that they were not consulted or warned ahead of time of this change of status. Hunting and conservation of the polar bear is an important feature of Inuit culture and livelihood. Animal rights activists (see, for example, the International Fund for Animal Welfare) have renewed their calls for an end to the seal hunt in Canada, citing animal cruelty. Inuit groups have applauded the Canadian government's request for formal consultations with Belgium at the World Trade Organization. The government alleges that the European country's April 2007 ban on the import of Canadian seal products violates international trade rules.

**““All the problems in the community are multifaceted and related to each other”: Inuit concerns in an era of climate change,” Elspeth Ready and Peter Collings, American Journal of Human Biology, 11 October 2020 [102]**

<https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1002/ajhb.23516>

Abstract:

### **Objective**

Human dimensions of climate change research in the Arctic often proposes ways for local communities to adapt to changes to their environment, foregrounding problems posed by climate change while treating social, political, and economic factors as background conditions. We explore the relevance of this research paradigm for Inuit by examining how Inuit from Kangiqsujuaq present and discuss the major issues facing their community.



## **Methods**

We thematically code and analyze the responses of 107 Inuit to three free-response questions about the problems facing their community and the best things about their community. The data were collected as part of a questionnaire for a project focused on food security and food sharing conducted in Kangiqsujaq, Nunavik, in 2013 to 2014.

## **Results**

Few respondents mentioned issues relating to climate change among the most pressing problems faced by their community. Rather, a suite of interconnected social and economic issues, particularly substance abuse and the cost of living, emerged as the main concerns of Kangiqsuarmiut. However, the environment was a central theme in respondents' favorite thing about their community.

## **Conclusions**

In light of the concerns identified by Inuit, we argue that much research on climate change makes incorrect a priori assumptions and consequently fails to capture aspects of Arctic socioecological systems that are essential for how Inuit are responding to climate change. An inductive, open-ended approach can help produce research more relevant to communities.

## Current & Relevant Information:

## **Introduction**

Rates of climate change in the Arctic are rapid and significant (ACIA, 2004), and research on climate change in the region is accordingly prolific. Alongside natural science research that focuses on topics including sea ice measurement and modeling, permafrost melt, vegetation changes, and of course, polar bears, a veritable industry attends to the human dimensions of climate change. The currently dominant paradigm in this area of scholarship draws on concepts from ecology and other fields to identify potential “vulnerabilities” and “adaptations” to climate change in Inuit communities. While research in this paradigm primarily addresses the implications of climate change for food security and traditional subsistence activities, it also increasingly addresses the potential impacts of climate change on human health and well-being. This literature has also been the focus of significant and, in our view, valid critiques that provide important guidance for improving research practice. However, what is still missing in all of this research are Inuit voices themselves. While some research reminds scholars that Inuit may have fundamentally different understandings of vulnerability and adaptation, little research has considered how Inuit view the problem of climate change within the context of other issues that they confront in their everyday lives.

This article examines responses of Inuit from Kangiqsujaq, Nunavik, to questions about what they perceive as the important problems in their village, based on interviews conducted in 2013 to 2014. Participants were asked three open-ended questions that concluded a survey about subsistence hunting, household economics, and food sharing. Given that the interview touched on themes of subsistence, access to country foods, and livelihoods, we expected that the questions might prompt Inuit to mention climate change in their responses. However, while the questions frequently elicited themes related to substance use, the high costs of living, and the economy, issues relating to climate change (even tangentially) rarely occurred in the responses. When Inuit mentioned the environment, their comments generally addressed the positive aspects of being on the land.

In the following, we first briefly discuss human dimensions of climate change research in the Arctic and critiques of this literature. We then introduce the study community, Kangiqsujaq, after which we explore the data on Inuit-identified problems. In the final sections of the article, we consider the mismatch between assumptions made in the climate change literature and how Inuit discuss issues faced by their community. We see this mismatch as a procedural vulnerability (Veland, Howitt, Dominey-Howes, Thomalla, & Houston, 2013). That is, the theoretical models employed in much of the human dimensions of climate change research, by ignoring the socioeconomic context of Inuit settlements, generate self-confirming questions. Furthermore, the data question the narrative that rapid climate change is outpacing Inuit cultural capability to cope.

## **Conclusions**

We want to be clear that we are not arguing that climate change is not an important problem for Inuit. Kangiqsujaarmiut responses to our question about what they like the most about their community help make this abundantly clear. Interacting with the local environment is central to the “best part of life” for Inuit (Condon, Collings, & Wenzel, 1995). Furthermore, engaging with the environment provides critical support for Inuit mental health and well-being (Kirmayer et al., 2009; Kral, Salusky, Inuksuk, Angutimarik, & Tulugardjuk, 2014). Climate change is also a potentially powerful narrative for motivating the structural changes needed to address social, economic, and political inequalities faced by Inuit communities (Hocine, 2018; Young, 2020).

However, the interviews we present here make it clear that climate change narratives and research have limited resonance for many Inuit, partly because poverty, access to food, housing, education, and health care are more urgent problems (cf. Jodoin, Snow, & Corobow, 2020). The responses of Kangiqsujaarmiut suggest that the main challenge they face is coping with the constellation of stressors related to colonialism, poverty, health, and well-being referenced through the theme of “drugs and alcohol.” The impact of a rapidly changing climate on humans is a problem deeply embedded within this much broader context. Our

results lead us to highlight what Veland et al. (2013, p. 315) identify as a “procedural vulnerability,” which occurs “where the methods of inquiry prevent participation or mask important issues.” As we highlighted above, AV conceptual frameworks stipulate climate change as a significant threat to peoples who lack the capacity to either cope or adapt. The results here suggest that the supposed victims of this threat—who are experiencing climate change in very direct ways—do not view the problem in the same way at all, a phenomenon that has been suggested elsewhere (Huntington et al., 2019; Young, 2020).

This leads to a procedural vulnerability because research that begins with questions about climate change prevents other concerns from emerging in the context of interviews. AV research design thus yields data that can only support the theoretical model that generates the research questions. The inductive approach we take here indicates that research attending to the broader constellation of social, political, and economic changes of the past century, while less glamorous and conceptually more challenging, may be more effective both in better understanding the human dimensions of climate change and improving the lives of Arctic residents.

#### K. Khanty [Russia]:

**“Khanty and Mansi: People,” Britannica, 5 June 2020 [103]**

<https://www.britannica.com/topic/Khanty>

#### Overview:

Khanty and Mansi, Khanty formerly called Ostyak, Mansi formerly called Vogul, western Siberian peoples, living mainly in the Ob River basin of central Russia. They each speak an Ob-Ugric language of the Finno-Ugric branch of the Uralic languages. Together they numbered some 30,000 in the late 20th century. They are descended from people from the south Ural steppe who moved into this region about the middle of the 1st millennium AD.

Their present-day territory lies to the east of the Urals along the Ob River and its tributaries, from the Urals and a narrow belt of foothills to a vast central lowland that slopes gently to the Gulf of Ob. Some of the territory, both highlands and lowlands, is covered by vast swamps grown over with moss, peat, sedge, and small marsh pine. The climate is severe: winter lasts for six months, producing snow accumulations of 6.5 feet (2 m); there is flooding in summer as the rivers—the Ob, the Irtysh, and their tributaries—form a vast expanse of water.

#### Current & Relevant Information:

The Khanty and the Mansi have many similar features, including habitat, economy, organization, and a number of traditions. Their principal sources of subsistence are hunting (traditionally with bows and arrows and spears, later with guns), trapping, and fishing (with nets, weirs, seines, and traps); reindeer herding (mostly by the Khanty) was usually a subsidiary occupation and was probably a result of contact

with the neighboring Nenets in the 15th century. The Ob-Ugrians traditionally either were nomadic or had settled dwellings according to their subsistence pattern. At summer hunting sites they generally lived in tents; their permanent winter homes were wooden huts. Boats, skis, and some horse- or reindeer-drawn sleds provided transportation.

The Khanty and the Mansi were formerly divided into tribes consisting of local territorial groupings. Each individual, regardless of tribe, belonged to one of two phratries and was expected to marry outside his phratry. A phratry consisted of several clans, each with a name or names of an ancestor or ancestor hero, a sign or brand to identify clan property, internal organization, an ancestor cult, and a sacred site.

Of all the peoples of northern Siberia, only the Khanty and Mansi had stringed instruments: a type of five-stringed zither and a one- or two-stringed, bowed instrument (its bow made like a small archer's bow strung with horsehair). The strings of both types were made from elk sinews.

Under Soviet administration the Khanty and the Mansi were settled on collective farms. In addition to the development of the aboriginal economy, such new activities as animal husbandry, fur farming, and agriculture were introduced.

**“Khanty,” Marjorie Balzer, Encyclopedia.com, 3 December 2024 [104]**

<https://www.encyclopedia.com/people/history/historians-miscellaneous-biographies/khanty>

#### Overview:

The Khanty were called "Ostyak" by Russians until the 1930s, when their name was changed officially to reflect their self-designation. They are closely related, culturally and politically, to their nearest neighbors, the Mansi, historically called "Voguls," with whom they share the Khanty-Mansiisk Autonomous District (okrug) in western Siberia. The district was called a "national" area until the 1970s. An area of intense energy development, the Khanty homeland, once larger than its current boundaries, has been inundated by temporary workers, most of them Slavs. Other native minorities in the district include the Nenets and Selkup (Samoyed groups) and the Komi (historically, Zyrian). Khanty also live outside their district, mostly in nearby regions of western Siberia. They are one of twenty-six "Peoples of the North," designated as a special legal category.

The Khanty-Mansiisk District of the Tiumen Oblast is bordered by the Yamalo-Nenets District and the Komi Autonomous Republic to the northwest and the Sverdlovsk, Omsk, Tomsk, and Krasnoyarsk regions to the southwest and east. It stretches from 58° to 62° N and 60° to 85° E. Khanty live as far north as the Arctic Circle and the Gulf of Ob, and as far south as the Irtysh-Tavda confluence, although they are concentrated in the Samarovsk, Surgut, Lariak, Beriozovo, Vasiugan, and

Kondinsk areas of the greater Ob River Basin. Their territory, inside and outside the Khanty-Mansiisk District, includes tundra and taiga, with foothills of the Ural Mountains and lowlands of the Ob River. Forests of cedar, pine, and larch abound along its multiple rivers. When the thick snow cover melts each summer, extensive flooding occurs, turning the lowlands into swamps of moss, peat, and marsh pine. The extreme continental climate is characterized by temperatures as low as  $-50^{\circ}\text{C}$  and as high as  $+20^{\circ}\text{C}$ .

The 1989 Soviet census recorded a population of 147,386,000 for the Russian Republic, 187,083 for the Peoples of the North, and 22,500 for the Khanty. The Khanty-Mansiisk District had a population of 1,282,396 in 1989. Thus, the Khanty are a tiny minority within their district and within western Siberia. Their numbers have increased only slightly from the 20,934 recorded in 1979 and the 17,800 recorded in 1926. Although industrialization and urbanization have escalated around them in the last twenty years, most Khanty have remained in collectives away from large towns. Their infant mortality rates are high, and their life expectancy rates, especially for males, are low. The average northern native 1980s life expectancy was 45 for men and 55 for women. Interethnic marriage is common with other Siberian minorities, and, to a lesser extent, with Russians.

#### Current & Relevant Information:

The first documents to refer to the Khanty indicate they had relations with Novgorodian traders in the eleventh century. Linguistic, archaeological, and folkloric evidence indicate that nomadic ancestors of the Ob Ugrians, possibly fleeing Christianization, had come north by the ninth century from steppes farther south. Crossing the Urals, they mixed and fought with indigenous populations and may have developed their dual phratry (or moiety) social system at that time. Conflicts with ancestors of the Mansi, Komi, and Nenets resulted in captives, who were made wives, slaves, or sacrificial victims. The Khanty paid tribute to the Tatar Khanate of Sibir from the thirteenth to sixteenth centuries.

In 1582 some Khanty decided to side with the famous Cossack Ermak against the Tatar Khan Kuchum. To the Cossack's joy, a delegation of Khanty elders bearing furs and wearing jewels and silk arrived in the Cossack camp. Ermak assumed that these elders were princes with greater authority than they actually had, but the alliance lasted long enough to defeat Kuchum. Both before and after, trade relations proceeded with mutual benefit and, sometimes, misunderstandings. Khanty paid what Muscovites and Novgorodians considered a fur tax, *iasak*, in return for gifts and trinkets that the Slavic traders saw as insignificant. Colonization followed Kuchum's defeat, although a few Khanty uprisings persisted into the seventeenth century. Some rebellions against Moscovite rule involved coalitions of Tatars, Samoyeds, and Ob Ugrians. In 1604 the Khanty attacked Berezovo, a Cossack outpost built where a Khanty sacred grove had stood. They were led by disillusioned members of the elite Alachev family, earlier favored by Moscow and even christened before the

czar. Christian proselytizing took place soon after conquest; Khanty children taken hostage were among the first to be converted. Tax incentives were offered for Khanty to become Orthodox, and sacred ancestor images were burned.

Russian settlers at first focused on the southern parts of Khanty territory, displacing some Khanty northward. By the nineteenth century Russians had moved to riverside villages throughout the region and a few had intermarried with the Khanty. Concern for Siberian natives was reflected in the liberal reforms of 1822 initiated by Count Speranskii and in periodic campaigns to curtail the sale of alcohol to natives by unscrupulous traders. Some Khanty joined a native revolt led by the Nenets Vauli Piettomin in the 1840s. By the twentieth century officials were alarmed at reports of disease, poverty, and population decline, especially among Khanty living in more southern areas.

In the north the Soviet era began as a rumor. Stories reached the Khanty of a Russian war, the czar's death, and "Lenin's new road." Most Khanty were not directly involved in the wave of destruction that swept Siberia during the civil war, as Red (Bolshevik) forces fought the Whites of Kolchak. The Khanty were worried, however, about village burnings on the Irtysh and supply shortages. A few Khanty revolutionaries, such as Ernov and Druzhinin, exposed traditional Komi enemies as Whites and eventually helped organize Soviet collectives. Native councils were formed with the guidance of the Moscow-based Committee of the North in 1924. The Ostyak-Vogul District, established in 1931, became the Khanty-Mansiisk District in the 1940s.

Collectivization involved a process of settlement, sometimes forced, of Khanty nomadic reindeer breeders, hunters, and fishers. Culture bases, kul'tbazy, established at Kazym and Lariak, were model collective centers, with schools, medical points, and stores. But the Khanty identified kul' with a word for "evil spirit." A 1933 revolt in Kazym resulted in Khanty taking Russian officials hostage, fleeing to the tundra, and eventually being arrested. Collectivization was not consolidated until the 1950s, when many people were again moved into larger villages.

**"Khanty," B.C. Alexander, ArcticPhoto, 2020 [105]**  
<https://www.arcticphoto.com/polar-info/polar-info25.htm>

#### Overview:

The Khanty are one of the indigenous peoples of northwest Siberia. They were previously called 'Ostyak' (People of the Ob) by the Russians. Today there are about 22,500 Khanty most of whom live along the River Ob in the Khanty-Mansiysk Autonomous Region and the Yamal-Nenets Autonomous Region. There are three separate groups of Khanty, 'northern,' 'southern' and 'eastern' and each has a different dialect and economic way of life. The Khanty culture dates back to the middle of the first millennium BC, and their ancestors are thought to have been Ugric horse breeders who moved northward into the taiga. By about 500 AD the main

regional groups of Khanty were formed in their current areas. They adopted a hunting and fishing lifestyle, while the northern group also herded reindeer. They were led by feudal chiefs before coming under the authority of the Russian state in the 16th Century.

#### Current & Relevant Information:

The traditional subsistence activities of the Khanty are river fishing, hunting and reindeer breeding. The main animals they hunt and trap in the taiga are elk, bear, hare, fox, sable, squirrel and weasel. They also hunt migratory waterfowl during the spring and autumn. Most Khanty live in rural areas in log cabins and also use tepee style tents made of reindeer skin or canvas. Reindeer herding remains very important with each clan having their own grazing and hunting grounds. In former times large reindeer herds reached 1000 animals or more in some areas, but most Khanty families kept much smaller herds of 20-30 animals. Some of the northern Khanty group still lead a semi-nomadic life, migrating with their reindeer herds in the spring and autumn. In the south the herders keep their reindeer close to the villages and the distances between their winter and summer pastures relatively short.

**“Khanty,” Marjorie Mandelstam Balzer, Countries and their Cultures** [\[106\]](https://www.everyculture.com/Russia-Eurasia-China/Khanty.html)  
<https://www.everyculture.com/Russia-Eurasia-China/Khanty.html>

#### Overview:

The Khanty were called "Ostyak" by Russians until the 1930s, when their name was changed officially to reflect their self-designation. They are closely related, culturally and politically, to their nearest neighbors, the Mansi, historically called "Voguls," with whom they share the Khanty-Mansiisk Autonomous District (okrug) in western Siberia. The district was called a "national" area until the 1970s. An area of intense energy development, the Khanty homeland, once larger than its current boundaries, has been inundated by temporary workers, most of them Slavs. Other native minorities in the district include the Nenets and Selkup (Samoyed groups) and the Komi (historically, Zyrian). Khanty also live outside their district, mostly in nearby regions of western Siberia. They are one of twenty-six "Peoples of the North," designated as a special legal category.

The Khanty-Mansiisk District of the Tiumen Oblast is bordered by the Yamalo-Nenets District and the Komi Autonomous Republic to the north west and the Sverdlovsk, Omsk, Tomsk, and Krasnoyarsk regions to the southwest and east. It stretches from 58° to 62° N and 60° to 85° E. Khanty live as far north as the Arctic Circle and the Gulf of Ob, and as far south as the Irtysh-Tavda confluence, although they are concentrated in the Samarovsk, Surgut, Lariak, Beriozovo, Vasiugan, and Kondinsk areas of the greater Ob River Basin. Their territory, inside and outside the Khanty-Mansiisk District, includes tundra and taiga, with foothills of the Ural Mountains and lowlands of the Ob River. Forests of cedar, pine, and larch abound along its multiple rivers. When the thick snow cover melts each summer, extensive



flooding occurs, turning the lowlands into swamps of moss, peat, and marsh pine. The extreme continental climate is characterized by temperatures as low as  $-50^{\circ}\text{C}$  and as high as  $+20^{\circ}\text{C}$ .

The 1989 Soviet census recorded a population of 147,386,000 for the Russian Republic, 187,083 for the Peoples of the North, and 22,500 for the Khanty. The Khanty-Mansiisk District had a population of 1,282,396 in 1989. Thus, the Khanty are a tiny minority within their district and within western Siberia. Their numbers have increased only slightly from the 20,934 recorded in 1979 and the 17,800 recorded in 1926. Although industrialization and urbanization have escalated around them in the last twenty years, most Khanty have remained in collectives away from large towns. Their infant mortality rates are high, and their life expectancy rates, especially for males, are low. The average northern native 1980s life expectancy was 45 for men and 55 for women. Interethnic marriage is common with other Siberian minorities, and, to a lesser extent, with Russians.

#### Current & Relevant Information:

By the twentieth century the Khanty lived in various camps and villages, as well as on the outskirts of a few towns. Seminomadic Khanty lived in a transhumant pattern with summer and winter camps, moving with their reindeer to the same family territories each season. Their winter homes were small semisubterranean yurts, with only a few (three to ten) grouped together. In 1914 at the peak fall-winter season, population density along the Kazym River, for example, was only 3.2 per square mile. In the summer families were even more dispersed, with members living in skin tents (Russian: chum) that were sturdy yet easily portable. In the northeastern parts of Khanty territory, Khanty outnumbered Russian settlers until the 1930s, but near the towns of Obdorsk (Soviet Salekhard), Berezovo, Surgut, and Tobolsk, Russians predominated. Separate Khanty villages of shacks and cabins grew near Russian villages along the main rivers, where Khanty sometimes lived in relatively settled, Russified style. On the Irtysh, a few villages mixed Khanty and Russian styles, with log cabins lining dirt streets that fanned out from a riverbank.

With collectivization came the decline of nomadic reindeer breeding, so that by the 1950s reindeer breeders' families often lived in Russian-style villages while the men herded the animals on long shifts. A few women lived with their husbands as part of work brigades, but each family had a permanent log home or barrack apartment in a village. Collectives centered on fishing, hunting, and fur farming grew much larger than traditional settlements, averaging 1,000 or more people. Ethnic enclaves of Russians and Khanty were typical of such collectives in the 1970s. The capital of the district, Khanty-Mansiisk, has a varied ethnic population in enclaves; it had fewer than 100,000 inhabitants in the 1980s. Towns with increasing numbers of Khanty residents include Surgut, Berezovo, and Salekhard.

## Social Issues:

**“Khanty,” B.C. Alexander, ArcticPhoto, 2020 [107]**

<https://www.arcticphoto.com/polar-info/polar-info25.htm>

### Overview:

The Khanty are one of the indigenous peoples of northwest Siberia. They were previously called ‘Ostyak’ (People of the Ob) by the Russians. Today there are about 22,500 Khanty most of whom live along the River Ob in the Khanty-Mansiysk Autonomous Region and the Yamal-Nenets Autonomous Region. There are three separate groups of Khanty, ‘northern,’ ‘southern’ and ‘eastern’ and each has a different dialect and economic way of life. The Khanty culture dates back to the middle of the first millennium BC, and their ancestors are thought to have been Ugric horse breeders who moved northward into the taiga. By about 500 AD the main regional groups of Khanty were formed in their current areas. They adopted a hunting and fishing lifestyle, while the northern group also herded reindeer. They were led by feudal chiefs before coming under the authority of the Russian state in the 16th Century.

### Current & Relevant Information:

#### **Social Problems**

The rapid development of oil and gas fields in the areas of Khanty settlements has led to a gradual destruction of their traditional way of life. In many areas, rivers, lakes and pastures have been badly polluted making pursuits like fishing and reindeer herding almost impossible. The decline of their culture is blamed by most experts for the high rate of alcoholism, poverty and suicides that occur in many of the Khanty villages.

**“Khanty,” Jeffrey Hays, Facts and Details, May 2016 [108]**

[http://factsanddetails.com/russia/Minorities/sub9\\_3f/entry-5133.html](http://factsanddetails.com/russia/Minorities/sub9_3f/entry-5133.html)

### Overview:

The Khanty (pronounced HANT-ee) are a group of Finno-Ugric-speaking, semi-nomadic reindeer herders. Also known as Ostyaks, Asiakh, and Hante they are related to the Mansi, another group of Finno-Ugric-speaking reindeer herders. [Source: John Ross, Smithsonian; Alexander Milovsky, Natural History, December, 1993]

There are about 23,000 Khanty. They live primarily in Khanty-Mansi Autonomous Okrug, a region along the northern tributaries of the Ob River in northwestern Siberia about 1,100 miles northwest of Moscow and 200 mile south of the Arctic Circle. Their cousins, the 8,000 or so Mansi (or Voguls), also live there. The region has been damaged by oil and natural gas exploration and production.

Only about 60 percent of Khanty speak their native language and a much smaller percentage live in the forest. In the Khanty-Mansiisk District they are far outnumbered by other ethnic groups.

#### Current & Relevant Information:

##### **Khanty and Oil Exploration**

Many Khanty have been driven from their homelands by oil and gas companies. Some Khanty continue live off the land in areas where there is intensive oil and gas development. In these areas some rivers have been polluted and reindeer migrations have been disrupted by oil drilling and exploration. Dying trees are blamed on acid rain from refineries.

In the 1980s the Khanty protested to the government about the exploitation of their traditional lands and the invasion of outsiders who had little respect for their traditional ways. In the 1990s they joined forces with other northern peoples to fight for their rights.

Some Khanty have consulted with the oil companies about establishing corridors for reindeer and minimizing the damages caused by drilling and explorations.

**“Black Snow: Oil and the Khanty of West Siberia,” Andrew Wiget and Olga Balalaeva, Cultural Survival, 25 March 2010 [109]**

<https://www.culturalsurvival.org/publications/cultural-survival-quarterly/black-snow-oil-and-khanty-west-siberia>

#### Overview:

While the West applauds the collapse of the Soviet Union, the disintegration of the Center as an effective political force in Russia has fostered the rapid development of a freebooting, frontier capitalism in western Siberia, based on oil and gas. While some attention has been paid lately to environmental issues in Russia, especially after the Usinsk oil spill in Komi, the issue has not been focused sharply enough. This war against the environment is also a war against traditional peoples, and West Siberia is the front line. "We are fighting for the last kilometers of our land," Vera Sopochina, a Khanty woman living just north of Surgut, told us.

The Khanty are one of the largest of the 23 "small nations," as the Soviets called the tribal peoples of Siberia, whose numbers total only a little over a million. Among the 22,000 or so Khanty, three groups - Northern, Southern, Eastern - can be distinguished by differences in dialect, subsistence patterns, and material culture. Called the Ostyak in Russian ethnographic literature, the Khanty live in the taiga among the low hills and marshlands along the banks and tributaries of the Ob' and Irtysh Rivers, the third largest river system in the world. Traditionally they did not live in villages but in widely scattered, extended family settlements, where they continue to avail themselves of traditional family hunting territories. Everywhere they support

themselves through hunting, and trapping of sable and fox. Fish constitute 70% of their diet, but reindeer herding is common north of the Ob'. Many are literate in Russian and fluently bilingual, but prefer to speak Khanty. And despite the efforts of the Orthodox Church, which in some areas has gained converts of varying degrees of allegiance, and despite the suppression of native religion under the Soviets, traditional belief and ritual still flourish.

#### Current & Relevant Information:

Today West Siberia is the site of one of the world's most extensive petroleum deposits. The process of development, begun in the late 1960s with the first discoveries of oil, has always been characterized by a minimal regard for environmental protection, preservation of cultural properties, and effective consultation with indigenous peoples. The 1970s were marked by the forcible relocation of Khanty families from their traditional family hunting territories or the destruction of the natural resources of occupied family territories which eventually forced the families to voluntarily relocate. The result is that - after 5,000 years of occupancy - there are today virtually no traditional Khanty family settlements on Vakh, Agan, Salim, and Vas-Yugan Rivers, though these were all well-populated areas, rich in terms of traditional economy, twenty years ago. Other river systems like Pim and Trom-Agan are heavily impacted and the Khanty are marginalized. Only the Khanty families of Lamin and Yugan River systems have been minimally impacted. By 1989 oil was booming; Surgut had over 300,000 people, all tied to oil.

However, it may be regarded elsewhere, the collapse of the Soviet Union, it is fair to say, has been disastrous for Western Siberia. Privatization led to the dissolution of the state oil monopoly, and production was turned over to regional oil companies, often directed by men who are wealthy and powerful enough to control the regional, okrug and oblast dumas and administrations. Profit-taking coupled with the internal debt crisis has meant that deteriorating pipelines and aging equipment are not replaced; loss of profits from reduced productivity of individual well clusters (some leave more than 50% of the oil in the ground) and spillage (over 3,000 pipeline breaks a year) drive the expansion of new territories for production. Russian regional oil companies routinely violate environmental regulations which impose only token financial penalties. Laws passed by both the central and okrug governments requiring the oil companies to obtain signed lease/compensation agreements from Khanty families before any work can be done are fraudulently implemented, and signatures on leases are still being obtained by coercion, false promises, administrative intimidation, even forgery. Major Western oil companies such as ELF-Aquitaine, Shell, AMOCO, CONOCO, and others are partnering with these rich, regional oil companies, often with investment that is partially underwritten by multinational lenders like the World Bank or by the sale of shares in the big Russian holding companies like LUKOil and YUKOS, some of which are now traded in the West.

Against this power, the Khanty themselves have no effective voice. There is not one Khanty representative in the okrug or regional dumas; by contrast, four of the nine members of the Surgut regional дума represent oil companies. In 1993 Yeltsin dissolved the system of village councils, in which Khanty at least had a local voice, and replaced them with village administrators, appointed by the regional government and confirmed in Moscow. These administrators are always Russians whose responsiveness to the pressure of regional administration, the oil companies, and the migrant oil workers who live in the village far outweighs any sense of obligation to the traditional Khanty families. To compound the difficulties of the Khanty, the state structures that formerly provided them with some economic support are virtually ineffective. Traditional Khanty families can sell neither furs nor fish nor meat to state production agencies in quantities or at prices sufficient to support their families, who are also now forced to deal with inflation and commercial grocery stores.

**“Three Crucial Crises in the Development of the Khanty and Mansi Unique Culture,” Victoria Vorobeva, Zoya Fedorinova, and Ekaterina Kolesnik, *Procedia - Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 2015 [110]**

<http://www.google.com/url?sa=t&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&source=web&cd=&cad=rja&uact=8&ved=2ahUKEwiavJTupl3xAhUjRjABHRNdDo8QFjABegQIAhAE&url=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.sciencedirect.com%2Fscience%2Farticle%2Fpii%2FS1877042815051708%2Fpdf%3Fmd5%3Dd41f30f8f8afe779948538810eee0899f%26pid%3D1-s2.0-S1877042815051708-main.pdf&usq=AOvVaw1a5W1qFpgs7LVJn-WEAw5d>

**Abstract:**

This paper deals with crucial crises in the development of the unique culture of the Khanty and Mansi. The peoples, who had resided the territory of Western Siberia long before Russian settlements were established, were the Tatar, Chulyum Turkic, Khakass, Shor, Teleut, Selkup, Nganasan, Enets, Nenets, Kamasin, Ket, Yugh, Kott, Assan, Khanty and Mansi. They had gained valuable and enormous experience of the climate, nature, wild and animal life of their environment. They had a very complex religious system that was closely connected both with the nature and with their life activities. All this – the unique valuable knowledge gained for thousands of years - has been degrading and degenerating. It is being researched due to major reasons of degradation and extinction of unique cultures of the Siberian indigenous peoples. They include: a) collection of the “yasak” and attempts of forced Christianization of indigenous peoples during the Russian Empire times; b) compulsory boarding education in the Soviet times; c) intensive oil and gas exploration in the 20th century.

**Current & Relevant Information:**

**Introduction**

The Khanty and Mansi are native Western Siberian people, living mainly in the Ob River basin of central Russia. Their present-day territory lies to the east of the Urals along the Ob River and its tributaries. From the administrative division, the Khanty population is concentrated in the Khanty-Mansiyskiy and Yamalo-Nenetskiy Autonomous districts of the Tyumen Region. The Eastern-most Khanty population resides in the Tomsk region. The Mansi live in the Khanty-Mansiyskiy Autonomous district of the Tyumen region and in some districts of the Sverdlovskiy region.

The native population at present is only about 1,86 % of the total population in this district (Saarniit, 2011). But only a smaller part of this native population follows their national ethnic traditions. In fact, the Khanty and Mansi can be differentiated into three social groups. The first group is the smallest one, the members of which lead their traditional lifestyle. Here, the culture is “glimmered” and preserved and needs to be supported. The second group is also not very big. It includes the marginal members, those, who say: “I am a Khanty and you must help me”. The third group is the biggest one. It includes those Khanty and Mansi, who were able to adapt to new life conditions. They are the so-called “urban Khanty”.

The people of Mansi and Khanty have their native languages (the Mansi language and the Khanty language) which comprise together the Ob-Ugric subgroup of the Finno-Ugric branch of the Uralic language family. As Khanty and Mansi have always lived in a vast area, the differences between their dialects are significant. Some of the Khanty and Mansi dialects are little described and highly endangered (Vorobeva, 2015).

The objective of our paper is to get a closer look at the unique, rich and varied cultural traditions of the native tribes of Siberia and pinpoint the crucial crises in the development of their cultures. This research is based on review of the following resources: Jordan P. & Filtchenko A. “Continuity and Changes in Eastern Khanty Languages and Worldview” (2005); Filtchenko A “Landscape Perception and Sacred Places amongst the Vasiugan Khants” (2011); Kulemsin V.M. & Lukina N.V. “Meet: Khanty” (1992); Forsyth J. “A History of the peoples of Siberia: Russia’s North Asian Colony 1581-1990” (1994); Wiget A. & Balalaeva O. “Khanty, People of the Taiga: Surviving the 20th century” (2011); Olekh L.G. “The History of Siberia” (2001), Neil M. Neyman “An Ethnohistorical Dictionary of the Russian and Soviet Empires” (1994).

## **Conclusion**

The rich unique cultural heritage of indigenous minorities of Siberia is endangered and at risk of extinction. Looking through the prism of the history it needs to be clarified what place is being given to the indigenous population in Russia. Then and there, now and here their rights for existence as a person, self-determination, freedom to religion, education in their mother tongues, divestiture of the environment for their traditional way of living and traditional nature – are being violated.

Assimilation of native people is a result of political discrimination that goes on to “kill” their land and to damage their cultural heritage using natural resources for economic benefits. The nature for the Khanty and Mansi is not only a source of living; the natural environment of these ethnic groups directly influences on their self-identification and traditional culture. The Khanty, Mansi and other indigenous population of Siberia strongly feel the particular imbalance caused by the industrial civilization. Facing the challenges of the industrial development in their ancestral land and enforced leaving the native communities by their children, the indigenous minorities are discouraged from preservation of their traditional and linguistic cultures. The state efforts should be strengthened upon supporting the preservation their historical, cultural, religious and linguistic roots. Measures of state support have to foresee the development of small settlements, communities or camps for the native peoples organized in their ancestral territories. Not without a reason the Khanty and Mansi beliefs, language and culture practices have survived mainly among the minority of those who continue to live in an isolated nomadic existence. Culture is dwelling in a language, a language exists, when speakers feel it, love it, use it, carefully protect it and transmit it from generation to generation, when children heard their native fairy-tales and when they are told their native stories by their parents from the cradle.

**“The Khanty,” survivalinternational.org, 5 March 2019 [111]**  
<https://www.survivalinternational.org/tribes/khanty>

#### Overview:

The Khanty are semi-nomadic, as are most herding peoples. In their homeland, the Siberian taiga, temperatures can reach as low as -50 degrees Celsius, and little grows. Traditionally, the Khanty have moved around with their reindeer, sometimes staying in ‘*chum*’ (reindeer-skin teepees), and sometimes in log houses in which a fire is kept burning at all times.

Moss is stuffed between the logs for insulation. The Khanty depend largely on reindeer for their food and livelihood, getting most of their nutrition from the animals. They also hunt and fish, gather berries, and sell reindeer and furs that they have hunted in order to purchase other supplies.

#### Current & Relevant Information:

##### **What problems do they face?**

The Khanty were persecuted under the Soviet regime in the 1930s – their children taken and put in boarding schools and their shamans killed – but today it is oil companies which threaten them. Oil exploitation on Khanty land is polluting their forests and sacred lakes, killing the reindeer and scaring off other game.



The oil companies often move in without consulting the Khanty, or trick them with false promises of compensation. Many Khanty have now been forced off their land and no longer have any reindeer.

They are reduced to living in 'National Villages' away from their ancestral hunting grounds, and have become dependent on the administration and the oil companies for their survival.

**“Indigenous Minorities of the North in conditions of modern Environmental Management,” Olga Yu Vaver, Aleksandr M. Vykhodtsev, and Ekaterina N. Chuikova, United Nations, 2016 [112]**

[https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/963918\\_Vaver%20et%20al.Indigenous%20Minorities%20of%20the%20North%20in%20conditions%20of%20modern%20Environmental%20Management.pdf](https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/963918_Vaver%20et%20al.Indigenous%20Minorities%20of%20the%20North%20in%20conditions%20of%20modern%20Environmental%20Management.pdf)

#### Overview:

General characteristics of the problem area in question are the following. Indigenous peoples of the North, including those living in the autonomous areas of the Tyumen Region of Russia, belong to ethnic groups, poorly adapted to modern living conditions. For a long time, their way of life has not changed, but the Russian expansion into Western Siberia has brought developments. Heavy colonization of the territories densely populated by indigenous peoples resulted in the destruction of the natural environment, the destruction of traditional industries and handicrafts, traditional way of life, culture and customs. The crisis of traditional economic activities has led to an aggravation of social problems. The standard of living of the citizens of a significant number of small peoples of the North living in rural areas or living nomadically is below the national average. The unemployment rate in the North, where the small peoples of the North live, is 1.5-2 times higher than the average for the Russian Federation (Nazarov, 1997).

#### Current & Relevant Information:

##### **Introduction**

All of the above is observed despite the fact that as a whole in the Russian Federation there developed regulatory and legal framework to protect the rights and traditional way of life of the indigenous peoples of the North, securing governmental support (in the form of incentives, subsidies, quotas on the use of biological resources). Benefits for members of minorities of the North are provided by the Tax, Forest, Water and Land Codes of the Russian Federation (Prava korennykh narodov Severa ..., 2005).

In this connection, the aim of our study was to investigate the perceptions of well-being of indigenous minorities in the modern environmental management. According to the records of the Millennium Ecosystem Assessment International Program, features determining human well-being may include: basic materials for a good life

(safe and decent living conditions, constant maintenance of a sufficient amount of food, shelter, clothing and access to the benefits of consumption; health, including good health and having a healthy physical environment, clean air and access to clean water); normal social relationships (social cohesion, mutual respect, the ability to help others and to care for children); security (secure access to natural and other resources, personal security and protection from natural phenomenon); freedom of choice and action, including the possibility for an individual to be who he wants and to do what he wants (Ecosystems and Human Wellbeing..., 2005).

## **Findings**

Analysis of the results of the study of representations about the welfare of indigenous peoples in current environmental management has shown that:

1. Traditional environmental management for indigenous peoples is a traditional lifestyle, relevant for the conservation and protection of their original habitat, which corresponds to the objectives of sustainable development. Despite the efforts of Russia's measures, the situation of minorities of the North is complicated by unsuitability of their traditional way of life to modern economic conditions. This leads to a rather low estimate of indicators characterizing welfare.
2. National rural settlements of Yugra differ by their economy, which is formed at the expense of budget revenues and lower-income types of traditional industries, in connection with what they observe outflow of youth, unemployment, pronounced antisocial factors (alcoholism and suicidal thoughts), an active process of assimilation takes place, traditional value orientations are lost. Thus, in accord with questionnaire data processing (preliminary results were published earlier in Vaver, 2011) only 87.7% of the respondents can be classified as indigenous peoples in some degree preserving elements of traditional culture in its various manifestations. In this case, among the respondents living in yurts, the figure is around 100%, while among respondents living in settlements it is 81%. The vast majority of respondents, 80%, identify themselves as indigenous peoples only by culture connected criteria (language, religion, traditions, folklore). In total 15.4% of respondents believe that their people are different from the rest of the Russian population by their special culture of nature management.
3. The owners of tribal lands, where oil is extracted, note an improvement in their socio-economic situation due to the payment under economic agreements (compensation for damages). But it is 100% of the surveyed owners of tribal lands, and 80% of those who do not have any, note that this improvement is temporary. Later (after fires, oil spills, etc.) there will be lack of space within the boundaries of tribal lands, where they will be able to implement the traditional industry in reality. In addition, the "easy money" provokes lack of motivation to continue the traditional way of life not only within youth, but also among adults.

## **Conclusion**

Thus, the study showed that the existing system of governmental support of indigenous peoples of the North does not take into account the identified trends. We think that to solve these issues, the following can be done:

1. To create active groups of indigenous people in their localities for studying: ideas to reduce unemployment, involvement of young people in the traditional industry, negative social factors, and other obstacles for their wellbeing.
2. To use results of the study and the groups themselves for effective management of national rural settlements.
3. To create a mechanism for "strategic compensation": the account for damage caused by human activities should include a loss of profit while the ecosystem recovery after the fire, oil spills, water pollution.
4. To consider the model of "ethnic nature parks"\*, in which indigenous peoples are guaranteed the right to pursue their traditional lifestyles, as a form of territorial organization of national rural settlements.

#### L. Nenets [Russia]:

**"Tribe: Nenets," BBC, 24 September 2014 [113]**  
<http://www.bbc.co.uk/tribe/tribes/nenets/index.shtml>

#### Overview:

The Nenets people of the Siberian arctic are the guardians of a style of reindeer herding that is the last of its kind. Through a yearly migration of over a thousand kilometers, these people move gigantic herds of reindeer from summer pastures in the north to winter pastures just south of the Arctic Circle. No-one knows for certain whether it is the reindeer that lead the people or vice versa. What is certain is that fewer places on earth are home to a more challenging environment, an environment where temperatures plummet to -50C and where crossing the world's fifth largest river as it deep-freezes is just part of the routine. Such a difficult environment unites the people physically through a regimented work ethic, but far more importantly, the Yamal-Nenets are unified by a robust and vibrant culture. It is a culture that has had to survive a turbulent history, from early Russian colonization, to Stalin's terror regime, to the modern-day dangers of a rapacious oil and gas development program.

#### Current & Relevant Information:

The Yamal Peninsula is one of the least famous, but most important, regions of the Russian Federation. With a territory around 1.5 times the size of France, the Yamal-Nenets Autonomous District (YNAO) is located in the West Siberian north, just northeast of the geographic border between Europe and Asia above the Arctic Circle. Today more than 10,000 nomads herd 300,000 domestic reindeer on the

pastures of the Arctic tundra. Under those pastures are huge gas deposits holding almost a quarter of the world's known reserves.

The Nenets herder economy is driven by the reindeer meat that they sell. The salary they get from herding state-farm reindeer is minimal when compared to the income they get from selling private reindeer, and from sawing off their antlers to be exported to China as a male potency drug. Aside from its market value, reindeer meat is a source of food, shelter, clothing, transport, spiritual fulfilment and means of socializing. For example, it is still common that a bride price in the form of reindeer is paid, and a dowry is brought into the young family when a tundra couple marries. The reindeer is also revered as a symbol. It's believed the people and the deer entered a kind of social contract, where reindeer offered themselves to humans for their subsistence and transport, and humans agree to accompany them on their seasonal migrations and protect them from predators. Such is the importance of reindeer to the whole district (and not just to the Nenets) that the reindeer symbol made it to the center of the YNAO coat of arms.

**“An Introduction to the Nenet People,” Zita Whalley, Culture Trip, 3 August 2018**  
[114] <https://theculturetrip.com/europe/russia/articles/an-introduction-to-the-nenet-people/>

#### Overview:

Russia's most iconic reindeer folk, the Nenets, continue to practice their unique herding style in modern times. This practice has survived a tumultuous history, and the Nenets remain the keepers of Siberia's Arctic despite new challenges threatening their traditions and way of life.

#### Current & Relevant Information:

The Nenet culture and way of life has survived the Soviet collectivization of reindeer herding and Stalin's efforts of ethnic cleansing, only to face new issues of a modern kind. The effects of climate change and the pursuit of natural resources continually threaten their ability to use their native land as earlier generations have done. Despite this, the Nenets are a robust people, who are determined to preserve traditional customs and practices.

#### **Homeland**

As the wardens of Siberia's north (above the Arctic Circle), Nenets have inhabited the rarely visited Yamal Peninsula for centuries. In their native tongue, 'Yamal Peninsula' translates into Land's End. It is wild and remote, and the climate is harsh. It is also about one and a half times bigger than France. Despite consisting almost entirely of near-to-barren Arctic tundra, the frozen land harbors some of the biggest underground oil deposits on Earth. For the most intrepid traveler, it is also one of the best spots in Russia to view the northern lights.

## Culture

The reindeer herd is central to the Nenet traditional way of life. Unlike other reindeer-herding people, the Nenets move massive herds between winter and summer pastures, traversing thousands of kilometers a year across frozen rivers in temperatures as low as -50°C (-58°F). This integral practice illustrates the nomadic traditions of the Nenets, who travel with their herds. Reindeer are a source of food, income, shelter, transportation and clothing for the people. So revered are the reindeer that the animal is often included in marriage dowries, and the Nenets believe that the creatures give themselves to humans for nourishment and transport in exchange for protection from predators along their migratory route. As a result of this belief, there is a kind of spiritual relationship between the Nenets and their precious beasts.

## History

The Nenets can trace their heritage back about a thousand years on the peninsula. Throughout this time, they have practiced their traditional methods of reindeer herding. In 1961, the Soviet Union collectivized the practice and established a handful of state-run farms. Herders were under fixed contracts and worked for a salary. Despite this, they were still able to maintain a nomadic existence and keep their family units intact. Today, about 80 percent of the industry has returned to the private sector, while the remaining 20 percent is controlled by the regional government.

**“Nenets People,” Britannica, 19 March 2021 [115]**

<https://www.britannica.com/topic/Nenets-people>

### Overview:

Nenets, Russian (singular) Nenets, plural Nentsy, formerly Samoyed or Yurak, ethnolinguistic group inhabiting northwestern Russia, from the White Sea on the west to the base of the Taymyr Peninsula on the east and from the Sayan Mountains on the south to the Arctic Ocean on the north. At present the Nenets are the largest group speaking Samoyedic, a branch of the Uralic language family. Their name comes from the word nenets meaning “man.”

### Current & Relevant Information:

Descended from people formerly inhabiting southwest Siberia, the Nenets are reindeer pastoralists, fishermen, and hunters (especially of wild reindeer) of the tundra, but they also include small groups of forest dwellers. Ethnographers generally refer to them as the Forest Nenets and the Tundra Nenets. The former group is much smaller (roughly five percent of the total Nenets population) and its language, considered seriously endangered because few if any children learn it, is spoken by only about 1,500 people. The language of the Tundra Nenets, the larger of the two groups, is spoken by more than 25,000 people, but children in some

regions are not learning it. The Forest Nenets live near the Pur River and on tributaries of the Middle Ob. The Tundra Nenets inhabit three principal regions: an area west of the Ural Mountains, the Ob and Yamal peninsulas, and regions on the Taymyr Peninsula and the Yenisey River. Smaller groups of peoples related to the Nenets include the Enets (Entsy, or Yenisey), the Nganasans (Tavgi), and the Selkup. In some areas Turkic languages and Russian have replaced Samoyedic dialects. Under Soviet administration, communal, collective production was introduced among the Nenets, with reindeer keeping remaining the main activity.

Reindeer breeding provides the Nenets with meat, lard, and blood for food; skins for making clothes, footwear, and winter tents; leather for making lassos, harnesses, and summer footwear; tendons for making thread; and horn for making various implements. A herd of 70 to 100 reindeer furnishes everything needed by a household.

Descent is traced through the paternal line; clans of people claiming common ancestry have their own territories, as well as common burial and sacrificial grounds and clan symbols and signs. Individuals marry outside their own clan. Women are in a subordinate position. There are several classes of shamans, with different abilities.

**“The Nenets of Siberia,” Alan Taylor, The Atlantic, 11 April 2012 [116]**

<https://www.theatlantic.com/photo/2012/04/the-nenets-of-siberia/100277/>

#### Overview:

In arctic northern Russia, industrialized resource extraction and climate change are presenting a double threat to the Nenets, an indigenous people native to Siberia. The Nenets depend heavily on their reindeer herds, using them for food, clothing, tools, transportation, and more as they migrate more than a thousand kilometers across the tundra every year. Photographer Steve Morgan recently traveled to the Yamal Peninsula to document the Nenets and their threatened way of life. Here is a selection of his photos, with captions by Joanna Eede of Survival International.

#### Current & Relevant Information:

Nenets herders move seasonally with their reindeer, traveling along ancient migration routes. During the winter, when temperatures can plummet to -50C, most Nenets graze their reindeer on moss and lichen pastures in the southern forests, or taiga. In the summer months, when the midnight sun turns night into day, they leave the larch and willow trees behind to migrate north. By the time they have crossed the frozen waters of the Ob River and reached the treeless tundra on the shores of the Kara Sea, they might have traveled up to 1,000 km.

The Yamal Peninsula: a stretch of peatland that extends from northern Siberia into the Kara Sea, far above the Arctic Circle. To the east lie the shallow waters of the Gulf of Ob; to the west, the Baydaratskaya Bay, which is ice-covered for most of the year. Yamal in the language of the indigenous Nenets means "the end of the world."

It is a remote, wind-blasted place of permafrost, serpentine rivers and dwarf shrubs, and has been home to the reindeer-herding Nenets people for over a thousand years. Today, the Nenets' nomadic way of life is under threat from the effects of climate change, making the tundra increasingly unpredictable, and from the discovery that the peninsula contains the largest gas reserves on the planet.

The Nenets' migration routes are now affected by the infrastructure associated with resource extraction. Roads are difficult for the reindeer to cross and they say pollution threatens the quality of the pastures.

Under Stalin, Nenets communities were split into groups known as brigades, and forced to live on collective farms and villages called kolkhozy. Each brigade was obliged to pay reindeer meat as taxes. Children were separated from their families and sent to government-run boarding schools, where they were forbidden to speak their own language.

With the collapse of communism, young adults began to leave their villages for cities, a trend which continues today. In urban environments they find it almost impossible to adapt to life away from the cyclical rhythms of the tundra, and suffer from high levels of alcoholism, unemployment and mental health problems.

The Arctic is changing fast. As temperatures rise and the tundra's permafrost thaws, it releases carbon dioxide and methane, greenhouse gases, into the atmosphere. With the ice melting earlier in the spring and not freezing until much later in the autumn, the herders are being forced to change centuries-old migration patterns, as the reindeer find it difficult to walk over a snowless tundra. The rising temperatures also affect the tundra's vegetation, the only source of food for the reindeer.

#### Social Issues:

**“Tribe: Nenets,” BBC, 24 September 2014 [117]**  
<http://www.bbc.co.uk/tribe/tribes/nenets/index.shtml>

#### Overview:

The Nenets people of the Siberian arctic are the guardians of a style of reindeer herding that is the last of its kind. Through a yearly migration of over a thousand kilometers, these people move gigantic herds of reindeer from summer pastures in the north to winter pastures just south of the Arctic Circle. No-one knows for certain whether it is the reindeer that lead the people or vice versa. What is certain is that fewer places on earth are home to a more challenging environment, an environment where temperatures plummet to -50C and where crossing the world's fifth largest river as it deep-freezes is just part of the routine. Such a difficult environment unites the people physically through a regimented work ethic, but far more importantly, the Yamal-Nenets are unified by a robust and vibrant culture. It is a culture that has had to survive a turbulent history, from early Russian colonization, to Stalin's terror



regime, to the modern-day dangers of a rapacious oil and gas development program.

#### Current & Relevant Information:

Since the discovery of oil and gas reserves in the 1970s the Nenets have had increasing contact with the outside world and the infrastructure on the Yamal Peninsula has been rapidly expanding. The tundra is now home to several gas worker villages, is covered by thousands of exploration drill sites, and is home to a new railroad connecting Russia to the West. Building infrastructure on a Peninsula of permafrost, bogs and lakes has significant consequences for the Nenets' indigenous lifestyle that exists on this environment. Malpractice has been recognized in the region and today there is a greater awareness of the dangers. Herders have also seen benefits from oil and gas, for example, there's trading to be done with oil workers who can get fresh meat and fish in exchange for rice/pasta staples and free rides on gas worker transport. This relationship has turned some local gas workers into 'tundra experts' who know the details of the herders' summer migration patterns. Nenets people have become more confident that oil and gas can exist alongside their lifestyles and those consultations have improved matters. Still, past damage remains and there is fear of more damage in the future. The 8th brigade (with whom Tribe travels) lost five crucial summer camp sites to gas development in the last eight years. Herders also noticed that the fish, which are crucial for the herders' diet in summer, are far less plentiful in the lakes. The issue is a contentious one and one which is very much still being debated. The herders themselves, with the support of academics, have recently tried to catalyze these debates by drawing up a list of issues, which they want addressed by administrations.

The oil and gas extraction programs will be crucial in shaping Nenets future but as it stands, the future is far from gloomy. The population of the Yamal-Nenets has been steadily growing through the 20th century. A huge portion of young Nenets decide to stay in the tundra as they can gain better income than in the villages and have the freedom of the nomadic lifestyle in the tundra. At one-point experts had guessed that overgrazing would have led to the collapse of reindeer herding, but the population of herds and peoples are still growing. This points to the experts' mistrust of the Nenets mastery of land management and a lack of understanding about how adaptable the brigades can be. Controversially, and like most other northern countries, Russia has decided not to sign a convention on tribal rights and national legislation does not yet require a comprehensive social impact assessment of industrial projects like oil and gas extraction. There seems to be a general disregard for policies relating to indigenous people. On the positive side, there are laws in place relating to 'traditional use of nature' and over the last 15 years things have drastically improved. However, such laws look good on paper but hardly seem to make it to the stage of practical application. Land is becoming increasingly scarce for the Nenets and they are well aware that pastures are not infinite. Pressure is accelerated by the increasing

presence of the gas industry which has led to discussions of land privatization among herders and bureaucrats. Privatization is completely at odds with the general Nenets principle of common land. Today, in northern Russia, most leaderships pursue short term interest and indigenous peoples are low-down on their priority list. In an attempt to resolve this the Yamal administration is drawing up a 'herders land registry' without giving them ownership rights to their land. This registry is intended to give both parties a solid platform for debate. It remains to be seen how effective such a system would be.

In the face of popular thought about the dwindling state of global nomadic groups the Yamal-Nenets continue to live a vibrant and robust cultural lifestyle. They have adapted to the social, political and natural world around them and although oil and gas poses a huge threat, hope still exists for them. The mineral resources of Yamal will all be extracted by the end of the 21st century or faster and in order to survive even this period, the nomads need free access to their pastures and a healthy natural environment. If this were the case, the Nenets people would have the chance to continue living their lives well into a future where oil and gas is nothing but a distant memory.

### **“Nentsy,” Countries and their Cultures [118]**

<https://www.everyculture.com/wc/Norway-to-Russia/Nentsy.html>

#### Overview:

For thousands of years, people have lived in the harsh arctic environment in what is today northern Russia. In ancient times, people relied exclusively on what nature provided and on what their ingenuity allowed them to use and create. The Nentsy (also known as the Yurak) are one of five Samoyedic peoples, which also include the Entsya (Yenisei), Nganasany (Tavgi), Sel'kupy, and Kamas (who became extinct as a group in the years following World War I [1914–1918]). Although many aspects of their lives have changed, the Nentsy still rely on their traditional way of life (hunting, reindeer herding, and fishing) as well as on industrial employment.

In the 1930s, the Soviet government began policies of collectivization, education for all, and assimilation. Collectivization meant turning over rights to land and reindeer herds to the Soviet government, which reorganized them into collectives (kolkhozy) or state farms (sovkhozy). The Nentsy were expected to conform to the dominant Russian society, which meant changing the way they thought of themselves through education, new jobs, and close contact with members of other (mainly Russian) ethnic groups.

#### Current & Relevant Information:

#### **Social Problems**

The economic basis of Nentsy culture—the land and the reindeer herds—are threatened today by the development of natural gas and oil. Economic reforms and

democratic processes in Russia today present both new opportunities and new problems for the Nentsy. Natural gas and oil are critical resources that Russia's economy desperately needs to develop. On the other hand, the reindeer pasture destroyed by resource development and the construction of pipelines is critical to the survival of the Nentsy culture. These two land-use strategies compete with each other.

Unemployment, inadequate health care, alcohol abuse, and discrimination all contribute to declining standards of living and higher disease and mortality rates among the Nentsy. Social welfare payments for children, old people, and the disabled are essential to the well-being of many families unable to support themselves entirely through jobs or traditional means.

**“High resilience in the Yamal-Nenets social– ecological system, West Siberian Arctic, Russia,” Bruce C. Forbes, et al., PNAS, 29 December 2009 [119]**  
<https://www.pnas.org/content/pnas/106/52/22041.full.pdf>

Abstract:

Tundra ecosystems are vulnerable to hydrocarbon development, in part because small-scale, low-intensity disturbances can affect vegetation, permafrost soils, and wildlife out of proportion to their spatial extent. Scaling up to include human residents, tightly integrated arctic social-ecological systems (SESs) are believed similarly susceptible to industrial impacts and climate change. In contrast to northern Alaska and Canada, most terrestrial and aquatic components of West Siberian oil and gas fields are seasonally exploited by migratory herders, hunters, fishers, and domesticated reindeer (*Rangifer tarandus* L.). Despite anthropogenic fragmentation and transformation of a large proportion of the environment, recent socioeconomic upheaval, and pronounced climate warming, we find the Yamal-Nenets SES highly resilient according to a few key measures. We detail the remarkable extent to which the system has successfully reorganized in response to recent shocks and evaluate the limits of the system's capacity to respond. Our analytical approach combines quantitative methods with participant observation to understand the overall effects of rapid land use and climate change at the level of the entire Yamal system, detect thresholds crossed using surrogates, and identify potential traps. Institutional constraints and drivers were as important as the documented ecological changes. Particularly crucial to success is the unfettered movement of people and animals in space and time, which allows them to alternately avoid or exploit a wide range of natural and anthropogenic habitats. However, expansion of infrastructure, concomitant terrestrial and freshwater ecosystem degradation, climate change, and a massive influx of workers underway present a looming threat to future resilience.

Current & Relevant Information:

**Introduction**

Certain Arctic regions have experienced more significant and rapid climate warming than others in recent decades. In the Yamal-Nenets Autonomous Okrug (YNAO), on Russia's West Siberian plain, average air temperatures have increased 1–2 °C over the past 30 years. Portions of northern Alaska and Canada have warmed to a comparably high level during the same period. Oil and gas development are also unevenly distributed around the circumpolar Arctic, with a few regions in North America and Russia experiencing extensive impacts, whereas others are virtually untouched. Understanding the response of West Siberian social-ecological systems (SESs) to rapid land use and climate change is important because they contain among the largest known untapped gas deposits in the world and are warming rapidly. The ecosystems of YNAO, in particular, have been subject to widespread terrestrial and aquatic degradation both north and south of tree line, although the production of gas from the tundra zone is still several years away. This article analyzes the past, current, and possible future responses of the Yamal-Nenets SES to the most significant external shocks such as pasture degradation by industry, rapid climate change, the fall of the Soviet Union, and influx of industrial labor migrants. Responses include widespread transformation of tundra vegetation, adjustments of migration routes and timing by humans and reindeer, avoidance of disturbed and degraded areas, and the development of new economic practices and social interaction.

The Yamal Peninsula is home to 10,000 indigenous Nenets, half of whom still practice reindeer herding as a nomadic way of life. The nomadic Nenets and their predecessors first hunted and harnessed reindeer during migrations on Yamal between 500 and 1100 AD, herding progressively more intensively after 1600. The longest migrations of up to 1,200 km annually between tree line and the northern tundra take place on the territory of the Yarsalinskii sovkhos or state farm. Many regions suffered drastic socioeconomic consequences after the demise of the Soviet Union. Yet according to key economic and social variables of both industry and indigenous livelihood, Yamal has fared quite well compared with other regions in post-Soviet Russia, some of which experienced a near total collapse in reindeer herding.

SESs emphasize the concept of humans in nature, that the delineation between social and ecological systems is artificial and arbitrary, and require integrated approaches to analysis. SES are also called coupled human-environment systems and coupled human-natural systems. Efforts to understand such systems are still in an exploratory phase, with resilience acknowledged to be a difficult concept to work within the context of managed "ecological economic" systems and surrogates more common than direct measures. The humans/nature divide is particularly illusory on Yamal, where Nenets are integral to ecosystem structure and function and fully cognizant of their key role as responsible stewards charged with maintaining a viable system. Globally, there is increasing recognition that humans are a major force in ecosystem development and evolution. Resilience is the capacity of a system to

absorb disturbance and reorganize while undergoing change so as to retain essentially the same function, structure, identity, and feedbacks. According to some, resilience is measured by the size of the displacement the system can tolerate and yet return to a state where a given function can be maintained. Those authors argue that, “in purely ecological systems, this function, such as the ability of a system to capture and store resources, is fairly easy to define. In social-ecological systems, defining this function can be more difficult”. The resilience perspective, which focuses on SESs, is essential in the problem of fit between ecosystems and institutions and so it is particularly relevant to this study. In a resilient SES, disturbance has the potential to create opportunity for innovation and development.

Reindeer (*Rangifer* spp.) are important ecologically within the tundra biome via their trampling, grazing, and feces deposition. The number of animals in YNAO has risen steadily from a historic low of 310,000 after World War II to ~630,000 reindeer today, 300,000 of them on Yamal Peninsula. Meanwhile, the number of nomads on the peninsula has risen, according to official statistics, from 3,552 persons in 1981 to 5,000 currently. According to one estimate, the nomadic population on Yamal has increased at least 3-fold in the last 300 years.

The recent transformation from shrub- to graminoid-dominated tundra here and elsewhere in Arctic Russia is acknowledged to be a combination of extensive industrial disturbance and heavy grazing/trampling over several decades by large herds of reindeer. At a more local level, highly productive grazing lawns can develop on organic substrates when herbivore activities are concentrated in circumscribed areas, such as along Nenets migration routes, some of which have been in use continuously for centuries. Dense swards can develop in response to even low-level natural and anthropogenic disturbances, such as camping and pedestrian trampling. The combination of grazing, trampling, and nutrient inputs from feces/urine favors grasses, sedges, and ruderal bryophytes at the expense of lichens, dwarf shrubs, and *Sphagnum* mosses. Together, these factors set up a positive feedback loop in which swards of nutrient-rich and easily digestible forage foster more intensive localized feeding, further increasing productivity.

The goals of this study were to identify critical determinants of resilience in an integrated SES that has experienced significant social/ecological shocks and increasing pressures, yet appears to have reorganized in ways that allow the overall system to continue to function, even thrive. The study required a multidisciplinary surrogate approach to understand the relevant ecological and social drivers and the interplay between them via stakeholder assessment and historical profiling. Previous investigations had reported on the extent of serious ecological impacts in the northern forest and forest-tundra zones in YNAO. Although gas development in the tundra zone is still in its early stages, preliminary work has demonstrated that there are widespread terrestrial ecological problems associated with seismic surveys, exploratory drilling, and new infrastructure, including road and railway construction.

Herders and scientists have cited the ongoing destruction of vast areas of pastures as an extremely important issue for the future. Therefore, we specifically sought to quantify through combined field measurements and remote sensing the amount of terrain affected in the vicinity of Bovanenkovo gas field (BGF), the largest deposit on the Yamal Peninsula. Exploration of BGF became intensive ca. 1980. After an early post-Soviet lull, development has rapidly accelerated with concomitant impacts on tundra vegetation, freshwater sources, permafrost soils, and reindeer nomads. The area comprises summer pastures for reindeer. As such, our focus was on net changes in the key components of pasture quality, including vegetation biomass, with special emphasis on key forage plants (*Salix* spp., *Cyperaceae*, *Poaceae*), and relatively free access to migration routes, which necessarily encompasses pastures, fishing lakes, and rivers that remain fully functional.

Previous studies had also revealed a host of socioeconomic, demographic, and health issues associated with establishing BGF and the road/railway corridor further south. We involved active nomadic herders directly in the research to interpret from their perspective the combination of social and ecological pressures that have most influenced reindeer herding over the past 20–30 years. This time slice coincides not only with the main gas exploration activities, but also with a period of rapid regional climate warming. Our aim was to understand the extent of ecological, social, and institutional problems, including fit, experienced during the early phases of development. Here, we present data showing that even when subject to extensive and persistent changes in ecosystem structure and state dynamics, coupled with extreme weather events and socioeconomic shocks, the social elements of the Yamal-Nenets SES have adapted surprisingly well. Despite adaptation to a clear ecological threshold crossing, in the shift from shrub- to graminoid-dominated tundra, planned developments and climate change may further degrade key pasture and fishing resources essential to maintaining the system. Significant portions of northern Alaska, Canada, and the East European Arctic contain comparable hydrocarbon reserves, and ongoing developments are expanding. Those systems are similarly characterized by a combination of rapid climate warming and large herds of *Rangifer* spp. dependent on low arctic tundra underlain by continuous permafrost. A critical difference is the intensive human management of domestic reindeer among nomadic Yamal-Nenets versus free-range caribou migration in North America, seasonally harvested by hunters based mostly in modern settlements. Given the geographically widespread consequences of industrial production and global change, we expect those lessons concerning the resilience of the Yamal-Nenets SES will have applications to other regions within and outside the Arctic.

**“Russia: A way of life under threat for Nenets as oil drilling and ice melt take their toll,” Charlotte Graham, Minority Rights Group [\[120\]](https://minorityrights.org/trends2019/russia/)**  
<https://minorityrights.org/trends2019/russia/>

### Overview:

Nenets are an indigenous Siberian people, whose traditional economy has long been rooted in nomadic reindeer-herding, fishing and hunting. The majority inhabit the Yamal Peninsula – meaning ‘edge of the world’ in the Nenets language. Though the Nenets live on the fringes of industrialized society, they are among the first populations to face the consequences of a changing climate.

### Current & Relevant Information:

Nenets came under Russian influence from the sixteenth century onwards. Under Soviet rule they were forcibly collectivized and their shamanist religion was attacked. A number of Nenets rebellions took place from the 1930s, but the community was largely sedentarized in the 1950s, and the region later saw a large influx of Slavic settlers employed in industry.

In 1990s the Russian energy company Gazprom initiated preparations for one of its biggest oil projects, the Yamal Megaproject, aimed at exploiting the peninsula’s gas reserves. This process soon led to large-scale destruction of plant cover and vegetation in the Yamal Peninsula, beginning a long period of environmental deterioration. In 2012, the first gas supplies were produced from the vast Bovanenkovo reserve, and billions of cubic meters of gas are now piped to Western Europe. As a result of this exploitation, many indigenous inhabitants have had to leave the Yamal Peninsula for fear of being forced to live in permanent settlements.

Today, the main problems confronting the Nenets are ecological damage deriving from exploitation of the Yamal region’s natural gas deposits, unemployment and alcoholism. Their nomadic lifestyle is now threatened as their migration routes have been disrupted by mining infrastructure, pollution and the effects of climate change. As a result, many young Nenets are forced to migrate to cities, where they frequently struggle to integrate and face a range of social problems.

As with other indigenous communities in the Russian Federation that depend on reindeer-herding for their cultures and livelihoods, a further key threat to the Nenets’ future is climate change. Warmer summers bring higher and denser shrub growth across the tundra, making it more difficult to gather and move reindeer herds. Rapid shifts in temperature can cause freezing rain, which, in turn, causes the lichen that reindeer depend on to be covered by a thick and often impenetrable layer of ice, with many dying as a result.

And the untimely melting of lake and river ice can make it difficult for Nenets to follow their reindeer’s traditional migration patterns. Indeed, certain parts of the permafrost that Nenets and their reindeer need to cross have ceased to exist in some places, and are only accessible in colder months elsewhere. Though Nenets also rely on hunting and fishing, reindeer herds are the sole livelihood of many, so a negative impact on this one species can be destructive for the entire community.



Moreover, reindeer-herding is central to Nenets' culture and traditions. Changing migration paths and scarcer pastures also mean that families have less access to medical services as they are forced to camp further from towns. Nenets can adapt by continuing to roam widely in search of pastures: the issue is whether mining and natural gas extraction will hamper their access to the necessary range of habitats. Ever-expanding gas and oil industries encroach on reindeer pasture territory, and so regions on the Yamal Peninsula (where the nomadic Nenets live and move around) are overgrazed. In addition, the new pipelines and other industrial infrastructure are creating further obstacles to traditional migration routes.

Sadly, these impacts look likely to intensify in the coming years as the region continues to be targeted for development and fossil fuel extraction. The Yamal Peninsula holds more than one-fifth of Russia's natural gas reserves, roughly as much as the entire reserves of the United States. These natural gas fields are situated along major herding routes, and there is currently a proposed pipeline to connect hubs at Bovanenkovo (already the largest gas field in Yamal, which herds must cross to reach summer pastures) and Payuta with oil and gas terminals. Proposed railways also cut straight through traditional Nenets routes. A new gas field called Kruzenshternskoye is to be constructed in the next few years on the Kara Sea coast, which will destroy prime areas of pasture, meaning even less grazing access for already weakened reindeer.

**“Threats to the Nenets Tribe,” Cassidy McKinlay, esri [121]**

<https://www.arcgis.com/apps/Cascade/index.html?appid=5440f623b5644d71bec3b4489d91c750>

#### Overview:

The Nenets are the last people on earth to practice a special type of reindeer herding ("Nenets Tribe," n.d.). They constantly seek the best land for their reindeer, migrating north for the summer and south for the winter ("Nenets Tribe," n.d.).

They migrate over 1,000 km every year ("Nenets Tribe," n.d.).

#### Current & Relevant Information:

##### **There are three primary threats to the tribe:**

1. **Education.** To increase literacy rates, Nenets children are forced to attend boarding school from age 7 ("Nenets History," n.d.). If they do not, the family is heavily fined ("Nenets History," n.d.). This rule means the family loses a helper, and often the children do not want to return when their education is finished.

2. **Urbanization.** The government gives the Nenets tools such as mobile phones and snowmobiles (paid for by taxing other companies) ("Nenets History," n.d.). Whilst this is undoubtedly helpful, it takes away some of their traditional ways of life.

3. **The gas and oil companies.** They are cutting off migration routes by building pipelines, and destroying sacred sites ("Nenets History," n.d.). They are building infrastructure which pollutes rivers and poses a danger to the reindeer ("Nenets History," n.d.).

**“Socio-economic Problems of the Yamal-Nenets Autonomous Okrug Development,” Pavel Nalimov and Dmitry Rudenko, Procedia Economics and Finance, 2015 [122]**

<https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S2212567115006292>

Abstract:

Empirical data on Yamal-Nenets Autonomous Okrug development is reviewed. The focus is made on critical socio-economic factors contributing to a slowdown of economic growth rates. In particular, these factors include a single-industry nature of the economy, a lack of qualified personnel, an environmental degradation, an inequality of income distribution, a poor transport infrastructure and a significant amount of old and dilapidated housing. All problems are strongly interconnected, so the success in each specific sphere depends on the solutions made for the whole spectrum of questions. We propose to solve these problems by using program-target method of budget planning for management of complex development of the Yamal-Nenets Autonomous Okrug, including the development of social sphere, infrastructure, fuel and energy resources etc.

Current & Relevant Information:

**Introduction**

The Yamal-Nenets Autonomous Okrug (Yamal) is one of the largest Russian districts. Its area numbers 769.3 thousand sq. km., which is about 4.5% of the Russian Federation surface (see Fig. 1). The entire territory of the Okrug belongs to the Arctic zone (more than half of the territory is above the Polar Circle). Climatic conditions of the Far North significantly impact on people's vital functions; therefore, development of the industrial and social infrastructure complex is essentially important.



Fig. 1. The Study area

Among the specific Yamal characteristics, we may emphasize the following ones:

- an isolation from the major markets and absolutely extreme environmental conditions, i.e., harmful for a permanent residence of a non-native population. Such conditions determine high-valued expenditures for economic activity organizing and the futility of the settlement's construction aimed to the permanent residence in the new areas of development in comparison with the mid-latitude regions;
- an extremely high environmental sensitivity regarding any anthropogenic intervention, inflicting, devastating and irreparable damage to the biosphere;
- wide-scale mineral resources located on the mainland and continental-shelf zone;
- a discontinuous development concentrated in the large industrial centers, single-sectoral economic structure, low rates of population density;
- a lack of transport and energy infrastructure required for a further development;
- a high economic activity dependence on fuel, food and essential commodities interregional import.

Yamal-Nenets Autonomous Okrug is a unique district with a high oil and gas industry concentration and a globally significant hydrocarbon resource potential. We can single out some complex problems that have to be solved in the nearest future. All of these problems are strongly interconnected, so the success in each specific sphere depends on the solutions made for the whole spectrum of questions. It means that strong dependence between human and physical assets determines efficiency of many socio-economic transformations. For instance, improving an access to energy, transportation, markets of capital or other public goods can expand an access to education and increase its productivity that can warn against further problems. Regardless costliness of early stages of environmental sustainability measures, they will certainly pay off in the long run – nowadays strong ecological policy is a highly efficient method of people health improvement and life expectancy increasing, as well as natural resources maintenance that can be used for the purposes of economic growth. Problems mentioned are refined below.

## **Conclusion**

The Strategy of socio-economic development of the Yamal-Nenets Autonomous Okrug until 2020 is the main document defining perspectives and target values of the region for a long-term run. The key method of solving problems defined above is program-target method. It is expected to include specific target indicators among sectors, territories and activities. In turn, the process of the Strategy implementation must consist of long-term departmental target programs, concluding a list of specific actions aimed at achieving on development of industries and socioeconomic indicators on a planned value. Methodical approach to an assessment of strategy of the Russia Arctic zone development, based on system of regulation of innovative transformations is developed in Komkov (2014).

The authors believe that Yamal tree of purposes has at least four levels of hierarchy. Each level has its own structure of tasks, which are the sub-goals regarding to the key objectives of the strategy. As a result of decomposition of the key goal it is obtained the tree of objectives, consisting of several levels. On the first level we may see the main object – “Sustaining and improving the quality of life based on the formation and development of a competitive economy in compliance with the relevant environmental requirements”. The objectives of the second level are the tasks decomposing the key goal of the first level, and so on. All of these goals, in conjunction with the key one, are forming the tree of purposes. Any target of the state regulation can be set and achieved only in conjunction with all the other objectives. Within the goals of the second and the third levels it is necessary to create a specific set of activities. The result is a hierarchical structure of the objectives necessary for successful socioeconomic development of the Yamal-Nenets Autonomous Okrug. It is essential to realize that the objectives of the lower level of the hierarchy are the subject for top-level goals, and objectives of the upper levels cannot be achieved until the objectives of the lower level are not executed.

M. Nganasan [Russia]:

**“Nganasan People,” Britannica, 28 Mar 2016 [123]**

<https://www.britannica.com/topic/Nganasan>

Overview:

Nganasan, also called Tavgi or Tavgi Samoyed, an indigenous Arctic people who traditionally resided in the lower half of the Taymyr Peninsula of Russia. They numbered about 800 in the early 21st century.

Current & Relevant Information:

The Dolgan also inhabit this region, and neighboring groups include the Sakha and the Enets. The Nganasan speak a Uralic language related to Nenets and Enets. The language has two main dialects, eastern and western. Well into the 20th century the Nganasan way of life was nomadic, based on fishing and the hunting of reindeer. In the 1930s Russian influence began to be felt with the introduction of alcohol, the encouragement of settled existence, and the emphasis on literacy (in Russian). This era also saw the commercialization and collectivization of reindeer husbandry. By the 21st century Nganasan culture had been heavily affected by these and other changes, and few children were being taught the Nganasan language.

**“Nganasan in Russia,” Keith Carey, Joshua Project [124]**

[https://joshuaproject.net/people\\_groups/15299/RS](https://joshuaproject.net/people_groups/15299/RS)

Overview:

The Tavgi Samoyed Nganasan people lived independent lives until the 17th century when the Russian government agents and merchants arrived on the Peninsula of Taymyr, their homeland. During the tsarist era they were forced to offer tribute to the Russians. In the 1930s their traditional lifestyle was forcefully restructured by the Russian communist government. In the 1960s, their nomadic lifestyle was eliminated, and they were forced to settle. Their traditions and ethnic identity have been diminishing ever since.

Current & Relevant Information:

**Where Are they Located?**

This people group lives on the Taymyr Peninsula on the coast of the Kara Sea, just south of the Arctic Ocean. This is Russia's north.

**What Are Their Lives Like?**

Life is difficult and humiliating for the Nganasan people. Most have to take menial jobs while others are unemployed. Some have joined the Russian military to have some way to earn a living. They are also looked down upon or ignored by the Russian majority.

## **What Are Their Beliefs?**

A small percentage of the Taavgi Samoyed Nganasan people are Russian Orthodox; the rest either follow their traditional shamanistic religion or they are secular.

**“Nganasans,” Fenno-Ugria [125]** <https://fennougria.ee/en/peoples/samoyedic-peoples/nganasans/>

### Overview:

Their autonym is ‘nganassa(n)’, frequently ‘ngano nganassan’, however this is not universal. The Avam group prefers the autonym ‘njaa’ (brother) and the eastern Vadejev group prefers asa. Nganasans have not developed a common ethnic identity. Their older but now outdated ethnonym “Tavgi Samoyeds” or “Tavgis” has spread to other languages via Russian.

### Current & Relevant Information:

#### **Territory**

Nganasans live in the southern and central parts of the Taimyr peninsula near the Arctic Ocean, administratively belonging to the Taimyr Autonomous District of Krasnoyarsk Krai. This is a predominantly treeless tundra area, while in the south there is also forest tundra. Nganasans are the northernmost indigenous people of Eurasia.

Before being forced to become sedentary, Nganasans migrated from The Pyassino, Dudypa, Boganida and Heta rivers in the south to the Taimyr peninsula and Byrranga hills in the north. In 1960-1990 a gradual forced sedentism of Nganasans to three settlements: Volochanka, Ust-Avam and Novaya – took place.

Today, Nganasans form a minority in these villages: the largest ethnic group is Dolgans, while in Volochanka there are slightly more Nganasans than Dolgans. These days most Nganasans have moved out to larger cities of the region such as Dudinka and Norilsk. Sedentary Nganasans live quite far from each other and thus have very limited interactions.

#### **Population**

According to the 2010 census, 862 persons considered themselves Nganasans. In 2002 this figure was 834 and in 1989 there were 1262 Nganasans of whom 83.2% spoke the mother tongue. According to later studies only 44% of Nganasans spoke the language in reality and only 17.6% of Nganasans used it on a daily basis.

#### **Language**

Nganasan language, along with Nenets and Enets languages, form the Northern group of Samoyed languages. Towards the west, the Avam dialect is spoken, while

Vadeyev or Khatanga dialect is spoken in the East. Differences between dialects are not significant. During the 2010 census, 125 persons claimed to know the Nganasan language.

The main language of communication both at home and at work is Russian. The language shift among the younger generation has been faster than among other Northern indigenous peoples due to the sudden transition to sedentism in multi-ethnic villages, as well as due to mixed marriages and residential schools.

Russian language and environment is regarded highly among Nganasans. On the other hand, this environment is rejecting Nganasans. It has been reported that Russians who interact with Nganasans have been subjected to bullying.

## **History**

Nganasans probably assimilated a Paleo-Asiatic hunting tribe, as well as western Yukagirs, northern Tungus and western Samoyeds. In the 17<sup>th</sup> century, Nganasans were taxed by Russians. To facilitate collection of yassak, Nganasans were offered 15 buckets of vodka a year. Exploitation of their work and natural resources took off.

For a long time Nganasans lived in moderate isolation from Russians, however the Soviet rule brought changes. Since the 1930s and 1940s – somewhat later than with neighbouring peoples – authorities started persecuting Nganasans as well, by repressing both shamans and “kulaks”, despite the absence of significant economic inequalities among the Nganasans.

In the 1930s, during the collectivisation, reindeer herding brigades were established that initially consisted only of Nganasans. Towards the late 1950s and in 1960s, Nganasan and Dolgan brigades were merged and soon led to Nganasans' forced sedentism which was seen as a prerequisite for “raising the cultural level” of nomads. This also led to the disappearance of nomadic reindeer herding. By the early 1990s over 90% of Nganasans had become sedentary.

Adapting to new circumstances have caused major problems for Nganasans. Most of them have been forced to perform unskilled labour and there are high levels of unemployment. Alcoholism is pervasive.

## **Livelihoods**

Reindeer hunting has been an important livelihood for Nganasans and continues to be so, given that Taimyr has the world's largest population of wild reindeer. Nganasans used to practice driven hunt at river crossings during reindeer migratory periods in autumn and spring.

Summer hunting of waterfowl, winter hunting of fur animals (with traps) and fishing has also played an important role in traditional Nganasan economy. They lived in temporary tent dwellings and kept sled reindeer who would drive the narta.



In the 19th century, Nganasans adopted large-scale domesticated reindeer herding with a permanent nomadic lifestyle (to the south in winter, to the north in summer). Most Nganasan migratory areas were in treeless tundra, however in winter they also reached forest tundra. In the middle of the 20th century, baloks or mobile houses driven on skis by reindeer, were adopted, thus rapidly replacing tent dwellings.

In the 1970s reindeer herding and nomadic lifestyles disappeared among Nganasans due to regional economic policies. Domesticated reindeer herding areas have been replaced with wild reindeer areas. In our times, reindeer and fur animal hunting as well as fishing is practiced in collective farm units. Women work in village sowing workshops, producing reindeer hide clothes and souvenirs.

### **Beliefs**

The shamanist-animist religion of Nganasans is based on the idea of reciprocity and balance between human and the supernatural worlds. The idea of balance is manifested in the sharing of hunting game between community members as well as in the moderate usage of resources in general, given that gods and tundra spirits punish greedy and selfish people. At times, sacrifices are made in the tundra in order to ensure good relations with supernatural powers and to secure good hunting game, health, happiness and well-being.

Shamans have mediated the relations between humans and gods for many centuries. Nganasans believe in the existence of supernatural spirits. In their cosmology, Mother Earth, Mother Sun and Mother Fire are of great importance. Their best-known shamanistic rite is the rite of the clean dwelling which took place in Mid-Winter after the end of the polar night and lasted 3-9 days during which the shaman was casting spells. The Kosterkin shaman dynasty is well known – their members were conducting shaman sessions exceptionally even during the Soviet era. These days shamanism has almost disappeared from the Taimyr peninsula.

**“Nganasan,” Galina N. Grachova, Encyclopedia.com, 3 December 2024 [126]**  
<https://www.encyclopedia.com/humanities/encyclopedias-almanacs-transcripts-and-maps/nganasan>

### Overview:

The Nganasan are settled on the Taimyr Peninsula, which is part of the Taimyr (Dolgan-Nenets) Autonomous District (okrug), which, in turn, is part of the Krasnoyarsk Krai of the Russian Federation. The Nganasan thus lack national autonomy, living as migrants with the Dolgans and other distinct ethnic groups. Several isolated families live in the district capital of Dudinka, others in other regions of the Russian Federation.

### Current & Relevant Information:

The Taimyr Peninsula is entirely above the Arctic Circle, in the permafrost zone. The Nganasan, as pastoralists, hunters of wild reindeer, and reindeer herders, mastered the territory in the center of the peninsula between 69° and 76° latitude and today move north in the spring and south in the fall, following the reindeer migration. The basic routes run along the North Siberian plain, which is enclosed between the Byrranga Plateau in the north and the Putorana Mountain in the south. The northern limits of the migration east of Taimyr reached 77° N, skirting Lake Taimyr. Practically all of this nomadic territory was in the tundra, covered with many small lakes and the sinuous channels of rivers bordered by clumps of low-growing willows, alders, and dwarf birches. In winter the Nganasan drew near to the forested tundra, situated along the divide between the basin of the Piasin River and the small northern tributaries of the Kheta and Khatanga rivers.

The climate is very severe. In the "spring" (i.e., the beginning of July) the rivers open up; icing over in the autumn takes place about the middle of September in the southern part of this land. On the northern lakes the ice usually melts toward the end of August, but sometimes endures throughout the entire short summer. The average mid-January temperature in Dudinka is 28° C; in July it is 12.9° C. Strong winds are frequent. Polar night lasts 65 days; polar day, 83 days.

Today the Nganasan are almost entirely concentrated in three small villages. The Western group of the Nganasan live in Ust'-Avam and Volochanka. The Eastern group (Vad) live in the village of Novaia Demografiia.

#### Social Issues:

**"Nganasan," Galina N. Grachova, Encyclopedia.com, 3 December 2024 [127]**  
<https://www.encyclopedia.com/humanities/encyclopedias-almanacs-transcripts-and-maps/nganasan>

#### Overview:

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#### Current & Relevant Information:

Before the Taimyr became part of Russia, bloody conflicts often arose among the various nomadic groups, even between Nganasan groups that were related to each other. These conflicts, as reflected in folklore, were basically over the control of reindeer herds. Russian power reduced these conflicts, but there were still occasional skirmishes with small governmental military units until the nineteenth century, by which time the territories of migration and of the autumnal hunts at river

fords were almost completely stabilized. The wealthier Nganasan and Dolgan reindeer breeders suffered because of collectivization policies and expropriation of the reindeer herds in the 1930s. Their ensuing revolt was put down and many people were repressed—including the shamans. Later the Nganasan took part in World War II (1941-1945); their collective economies supplied the army with warm clothing, meat, and fish.

**“The Nganasans,” B.C. Alexander, ArcticPhoto, 2020 [128]**

<https://www.arcticphoto.com/polar-info/polar-info30.htm>

#### Overview:

The Nganasans are the most northerly indigenous people in Siberia. They belong to the Samoyedic group of Uralic peoples and settled on the Taymyr Peninsula that protrudes into the Arctic Ocean around 500 AD. These early Nganasans were primarily nomadic hunters. The Taymyr Peninsula has a particularly harsh tundra environment with a severe climate. The average temperature in winter is below -30°C and the summer high is +13° C. The fauna of the Taymyr Peninsula is polar and includes species like: arctic fox, wolf, wild reindeer, arctic hare, ermine and lemming. In coastal areas polar bears can also be found.

Today the population of the Nganasans is only about 830. They live in the Avam district of the west of the Peninsula in the Pyassina, Dudypa and Boganiya river valleys. Other groups live further east in the Khantanga district along the River Heta and also by Lake Taymyr and Khatanga Bay. The Nganasans neighbors are the Nenets and Enets in the west and the Dolgans and Yakuts in the east.

#### Current & Relevant Information:

##### Social Problems

Alcoholism, unemployment, poverty and suicide are the main social issues found in Nganasan communities. They are widely attributed to the loss of their culture and the sedentary life in settlements.

**“Land Use and Social Change among the Dolgan and Nganasan of Northern Siberia,” John P. Ziker, *Senri Ethnological Studies*, January 2001 [129]**

[https://www.researchgate.net/profile/John-Ziker/publication/238103824\\_Land\\_Use\\_and\\_Social\\_Change\\_among\\_the\\_Dolgan\\_and\\_Nganasan\\_of\\_Northern\\_Siberia/links/0c960529fbc35cfd04000000/Land-Use-and-Social-Change-among-the-Dolgan-and-Nganasan-of-Northern-Siberia.pdf?origin=publication\\_detail](https://www.researchgate.net/profile/John-Ziker/publication/238103824_Land_Use_and_Social_Change_among_the_Dolgan_and_Nganasan_of_Northern_Siberia/links/0c960529fbc35cfd04000000/Land-Use-and-Social-Change-among-the-Dolgan-and-Nganasan-of-Northern-Siberia.pdf?origin=publication_detail)

#### Overview:

This research investigated the strategies that native people in the Siberian Arctic are employing in response to the collapse of socialism and the planned economy in Russia. Information was collected to characterize, compare, and contrast two types

of households - those that maintained use-rights to state enterprise lands and those that claimed family/clan holdings. Family/clan holdings came about in response to calls for self-determination by indigenous political leaders or the national level. In the Taimyr Autonomous District, these private land holdings have gone through a number of forms since the inception of this land-tenure type in 1992. These types are described briefly below. From the regional perspective, family/clan holdings were part and parcel of the newly developing capitalist economic system, involving the members in the regional economy as producers of traditional products and rational users of the tundra. Ironically, the other strategy-maintaining use-rights to state-enterprise lands involved decreasing contact with the regional economy. The management of what remained of the state enterprise system allowed native hunters to continue to use the hunting territories allocated to them during the Soviet period, and kept them on the employment rolls even though the hunters did not receive regular salaries. This strategy allowed the hunters to practice household subsistence foraging, occasionally turn in products for putative remuneration, receive ever-decreasing allotments of fuel and equipment, and maintain eligibility for state pensions upon retirement.

Extended field research took place in the central Taimyr lowland settlement of Ust'-Avam, Krasnoyarskii Krai (territory). Currently, both Dolgan and Nganasan inhabit Ust'-Avam and the surrounding tundra, along with a minority of non-native individuals from republics of the former Soviet Union. Ethnographic work and participant observation were combined with socio-demographic survey and archival research to evaluate the costs and benefits of each land-tenure strategy.

Given their remote location in the Central Siberian Arctic, and the dismantling of the beneficent and authoritative factory-state in the early 1990s, the Dolgan and Nganasan are more isolated now than at any time in the last 30 years. Subsistence hunting, fishing, and gathering now provide the main source of nutrition for local households, whereas prior to the breakup of the Soviet Union, meat and fish were sold in the local store, and households that were net producers were supposed to purchase what they needed for their own consumption. With growing local importance of a subsistence economy and non-market distribution of food products, land tenure has to some extent reverted to its formal communal use, rather than following formal ownership procedures through family-clan holdings. In this way, land tenure, an important variable in the native agenda of self-determination, has changed in unexpected ways in Dolgan and Nganasan settlements since 1991.

#### Current & Relevant Information:

#### **Conclusion**

The establishment of family/clan holdings appears to have had multiple purposes. First, ostensibly family/clan holdings were intended to be lifetime-inheritable lands protected from industrial development, reserved for native people and their

traditional economic activities. Second, family/clan holdings were a unique Russian government solution for aboriginal land claims. The native people were allowed to take land, not as nations on reservations, but as individual families and their kin. Third, as an undercurrent in the administration's practice, establishment of family/clan holdings was the logical continuation of the process of privatization of state farms occurring across rural Russia. If privatization did not lead to rational use, the land could be reclaimed by the state and reassigned. Fourth, in some cases, family/clan holdings were granted for political reasons - i.e., to native members of regional or local administrations, or high-profile native families in the city. With these functions in mind, the distribution of family/clan holdings in Dudinka district is no surprise. Access to transportation services and markets necessary for maintaining rational use of the land (from the perspective of regional officials), and proximity to government and administrative institutions is necessary to establish and maintain the holding.

The changes in the type of family/clan holding available from the administration represent the diminishing position of the remote indigenous communities in regional politics. As the Russian economy has experienced crisis after crisis, and the wars in Chechnia have brought ethnic divisiveness to the forefront, indigenous Siberian self-determination has come under greater scrutiny by the public and government. Regional land grants to native families have become more provisional since the disbanding of parliament in 1993.

Capital-intense production strategies are not succeeding in the heart of the Taimyr tundra, where thousands of tons of food were provided to urban centers during the Soviet era. Family/clan holdings cannot operate under current economic conditions as producers, distributors, and marketers. Rather, hunters and their families have reoriented to a foraging economy with opportunistic and supplemental exchange in the larger economy. As part of the subsistence economy, non-market reciprocal exchange and altruistic gifting of meat and fish occurs under the tundra code: "Give it, if you have it." As part of the reciprocal exchange arrangements, some land has reverted to communal use with informal negotiations determining hunt locations and party composition. Formal land claims are too costly for hunters and their families, considering their potential economic benefit from sales in urban markets. Without an organization that provides distribution and marketing, the least risky strategy for native hunters in remote communities is to practice subsistence hunting and minimize involvement with the formal economy.

**"Sharing, Subsistence, and Social Norms in Northern Siberia," John P. Ziker, [boisestate.edu](http://boisestate.edu), 1 January 2014 [130]**

[https://scholarworks.boisestate.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?referer=http://www.google.com/url?sa=t&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&source=web&cd=&ved=2ahUKEwjN5d\\_jJ7xAhVXaM0KHbOPCW8QFjALegQIDhAE&url=http%3A%2F%2Fscholarworks.boisestate.edu%2Fcgi%2](https://scholarworks.boisestate.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?referer=http://www.google.com/url?sa=t&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&source=web&cd=&ved=2ahUKEwjN5d_jJ7xAhVXaM0KHbOPCW8QFjALegQIDhAE&url=http%3A%2F%2Fscholarworks.boisestate.edu%2Fcgi%2)

**Abstract:**

The majority of families in Ust'-Avam in northern Siberia are dependent on subsistence hunting, fishing, and trapping and have been part of a vertically integrated industrial economy in a remote area of the former Soviet Union. Thus, the results from behavioral games conducted there in 2003—the dictator game (DG), the ultimatum game (UG), and the third-party punishment game (TPG)—lend themselves to comparison with other indigenous hunter-gatherers, as well as with working communities in other nation-states.

My ethnographic research in the region beginning in 1992 helps to contextualize these results. The two indigenous ethnic minorities in the community (Dolgan and Nganasan) have differing linguistic, religious, and economic histories, and I took these differences into account in my analysis of the game results. Group characteristics did not result in different outcomes in the experiments, although individual and household characteristics did. The results show moderate levels of second-party punishment in the ultimatum game, along with relatively high offers and a notable concern for fairness in the dictator game.

The chapter begins with a summary of the ethnographic material relevant to this community of indigenous hunter-fisher-trappers in northern Siberia. Next, results of player surveys and a descriptive analysis of the game results are presented. The chapter closes with a presentation and discussion of the multiple regressions of the game results.

**Current & Relevant Information:**

**Conclusions**

What were the expectations for the games in light of the contextual information for Ust'-Avam provided at the outset? The first expectation was that kinship, as documented in interviews and repeated visits, would be confirmed as an important vector of resource and food-sharing in the community. If kinship assumptions carried over to the games, then one might expect individuals with more offspring to be more generous. A better measure might have been number of relatives in the community, but that information was not included on the player data sheet, since the definition of "relative" is difficult to standardize across cultures. Using my genealogies and census information for the community, I counted the number of living siblings, aunts and uncles, and first cousins for every player. Linear regression of these kin counts on DG offers, UG offers, and MinAOs were uncorrelated.

I also investigated the effect of the presence of a living father, mother, or spouse on UG offers, DG offers, and MinAOs, using independent sample t-tests. Two of nine t-tests show significant differences. First, the difference in mean UG offer of players

with living versus nonliving spouses (a mean of 40 for those with a living spouse versus a mean of 60 for those without a living spouse) is significant ( $t = 2.162$ ,  $p = 0.042$ ). Second, the mean MinAO of players with a living versus nonliving father (a mean of 18 for those without a living father and a mean of 3.333 for those with a living father) is significant ( $t = 2.634$ ,  $p = 0.022$ ). Having a living spouse lowers the mean UG offer, and having a living father lowers the mean MinAO. In both cases, the effect is a result of a few individuals with neither a living spouse nor a living father playing in a more generous fashion. While suggestive, the overall effect of kin on game play is not robust, which may be a result of the anonymous and uncontextualized nature of these experiments.

Furthermore, in regression analyses of data from the player data sheets, the players' number of offspring and their age were not related to player 1 offers in either the dictator game or the ultimatum game or with player 2 minimum acceptable offers in the ultimatum game. The number of individuals living together (household size) was shown to be a negative factor on offers in the DG and with MinAOs. This result may indicate greater levels of competition over resources in larger households. Overall, the kin effects on game behavior in this set of experiments are minimal.

A second expectation about sharing in the community is that those with resources (the "haves") would make transfers to those who do not have resources (the "have-nots," including the elderly, single mothers, and those who are not good at hunting), as documented in many food-sharing studies. Carrying this idea into the games, one might expect a positive correlation between generosity and economic indicators, such as wealth. In fact, the opposite was demonstrated. Wealth indicators are negatively related to DG offers. It is likely that maintaining wealth items in the community indicates a history of not lending them out, and thus greater concern for self. On the other hand, disposable income is positively related to higher offers in the DG, as predicted.

Considering the hardships of the post-socialist economy, one might expect increased selfishness over limited resources during the transition to a free market. In fact, a frenzy of property acquisitions occurred in central regions of Russia in the 1990s, and the privatization of industry was notoriously corrupt. In the Ust'-Avam community, by contrast, common-pool territorial strategies and nonmarket food-sharing developed to deal with the vagaries of cash payments and the supply of consumer goods. The demographic profile of the community indicates much stress on adults (high mortality rates due largely to binge-drinking), illustrating limited but influential contact with markets—the source of alcohol and other consumer goods. Only a few individual incomes were greater than two standard deviations above the average income, and many individuals received less than the mean because their only source of income was social welfare. A concern for fairness might be expected among those who had greater contact with outside bureaucracy and institutions—such as teachers and other civil service workers—and among those who were better



able to make purchases in the market. In addition, I observed that people in Ust'-Avam who had money pooled money with relatives to purchase wealth items, such as new rifles. Similarly, very successful hunters and fishermen in Ust'-Avam were regularly traded surplus with middlemen to acquire fuel and supplies. They were very concerned with the fairness of trades and often discussed unfair traders. In fact, regression analysis indicates that standard-deviation increases in income are strongly related to increased DG offers, but unrelated to UG offers and MinAOs. In the UG, it is likely that potential costly punishment drowned out the income effect on fairness.

Third, one might expect some differences in the game results attributable to the different religious and ethnic backgrounds of the two major indigenous ethnic groups in the community. Interestingly, there were no differences by ethnic group or religion, although frequency of attendance at religious services (indicated by twelve of sixty participants) was marginally related to increased DG offers.

Generosity is encouraged among the Dolgan and Nganasan through kinship, food-sharing, and common-property traditions, including maxims, aphorisms, and cosmological ideas that reward giving and emphasize negative outcomes of selfishness. It appears that these norms of sharing manifest in the pattern of DG offers in Ust'-Avam. In the UG, there were moderate numbers of low offers and moderate levels of punishment, which may reflect the social norms surrounding reciprocal sharing and by-product cooperation in collective procurement events. There was a small level of risk-taking in the community, as exhibited by a low incidence of low UG offers and a complementary moderate level of willingness to punish egoists. Player 2s expressed a willingness to accept what was given in the postgame interviews. The influence of individual income on DG offers also probably reflects individual experiences with exchanges in the larger economy. All of these results are consistent with Ust'-Avam's subsistence hunting and gathering lifestyle, common-pool resources, and expectation that all community members are entitled to aid.

**“Lifestyle, social and economic status of indigenous peoples,”** amap.no [\[131\]](https://www.amap.no/documents/download/1068/inline)  
<https://www.amap.no/documents/download/1068/inline>

#### Overview:

Russian legislation defines indigenous populations of the Russian Federation as follows:

*“The numerically small indigenous populations of the Russian Federation (hereafter referred to as Indigenous Peoples) are those residing in the areas of the traditional settlements of their forefathers, preserving their traditional lifestyle, economy and trades, who perceive themselves as an independent ethnic entity, and whose population in the Russian Federation does not exceed 50000. The Common Register of the Indigenous Peoples of the Russian Federation is*

*approved by the Government of the Russian Federation based on information provided by the authorities of the administrative territories of the Russian Federation where the indigenous populations reside.”*

The law further clarifies that:

*“... the traditional lifestyle of Indigenous Peoples is the strategy of survival which has been developed throughout their history, based on the experience of their forefathers in nature management, original social structure, accommodation, original culture, and the preservation of customs and beliefs.” (Federal Law, 1999).*

Currently these characteristics provide the main criteria for the identification of the indigenous peoples in Russia. To date, this definition has applied to 40 indigenous minorities, who are listed in the Common Register, mentioned in the Law. Individuals belonging to these indigenous minorities are eligible for special targeted programs and a number of privileges to ensure their security.

The indigenous peoples included in the Register share many common characteristics and problems. At the same time, they also differ significantly from each other, which makes the framing of a single concept of sustainable development a difficult task.

Based on their original settlement patterns, the indigenous peoples of Russia can be classified into several groups. One of these groups comprises the indigenous peoples of Northern Russia, Siberia and the Far East, a group that are distinguished by extreme living conditions, prolonged isolation from other cultures, their distinctive material and spiritual culture and migratory habits, in addition to other traits. One important feature shared by this group of indigenous peoples is a deeper overall social and economic crisis than that encountered in other minority population groups in Russia.

The group of indigenous peoples of Northern Russia, Siberia and the Far East is a sub-group, comprising 11 indigenous peoples whose residence in the Arctic region (i.e., in the coastal and northern areas of the Arctic Ocean catchment) is a determining characteristic. It is generally believed that the forefathers of these contemporary Arctic indigenous peoples came to the Arctic region 10-12000 years ago, during the final stage of the last glaciation. This was the beginning of a period of migration by ancient tribes across the Arctic zones of Eurasia, and by northward migration of tribes from the south. This mixing between the new immigrants and the ancient indigenous tribes started a new page in the ethnic history of the North.

In fact, northern ethnic groups were continuing to develop up until the 19th century and it was only when the original inhabitants of ‘Siberia’ came in contact with ‘European civilization’, that they were considered to be ‘indigenous peoples’, as this term is understood today. Prior to this they were considered ‘disintegrated ethno-

linguistic communities, characterized by unstable population density, dispersion, ethno-cultural heterogeneity and weak intra-ethnic communication' (National Report, 2000).

The features which characterize the northern indigenous peoples are determined by their environment. Their small population size also results from external factors and does not indicate either under-development or inherent population decline. On the contrary, for their specific geographic environment and economy type, a small population size represents an optimal solution (Gumilev and Kurkchi, 1989). However, the same factors which ensured the high degree of adaptability of northern populations to their extreme living conditions, also made it difficult for them to integrate with other cultures, especially those which were more 'developed'. The resulting conflicts have affected all aspects of their life, including social, cultural and spiritual integrity.

Before conversion to Christianity, the indigenous populations of northern Russia were animists, believing all creatures and objects of the world to possess souls. This allowed them to explain the world around them, including many natural phenomena, and also created a need for communicating with spirits. Such beliefs led to the emergence and development of shamanism. Shamanism and shamanistic practices provided faith in one's own abilities in the face of fears aroused by the incomprehensibility of nature and man's inability to influence it. This was the shaman's role and explains his influence on his fellow-tribesmen (Kasavin, 1990).

The arrival of Europeans in the northern regions brought significant changes to the world of the indigenous populations – especially in connection with the discovery and development of mineral deposits. It was during this period that the various indigenous ethnic groups were defined and assigned their modern names (generally different from those used by the indigenous people themselves). This occurred as a result of various political and legal decisions, reforms and government activities, including the introduction of the census and passports, administrative and territorial division, and deliberate elimination of dialects and even some ethnicities.

The expanding 'Register of Indigenous Peoples of Northern Russia', established by law, currently identifies 30 indigenous peoples who reside within the five Republics, four Krai, ten Oblasts, and eight Autonomous Okrugs which comprise almost the whole area of the Russian North, Siberia (including Southern Siberia) and the Russian Far East. The total population of northern indigenous peoples is less than 200,000 people, and constitutes less than 2% of the total population of the northern regions of Russia.

It is clear that the northern indigenous peoples have undergone significant changes, which have distanced them from their forefathers in economic, social, cultural, and even anthropometrical respects. However, certain groups of the contemporary indigenous population still preserve both the cultural identity and the economic

activities which are considered to determine a traditional lifestyle and pattern of settlement (nomadic or semi-nomadic lifestyle, etc.).

#### Current & Relevant Information:

### **Social impact of recent political and economic reforms**

The State policy towards northern indigenous peoples has changed at various times. From the very beginning of colonization, the Tsarist government faced the problem of the formalization of citizenship of the colonized indigenous peoples and their lands. The problem arose because at the time when the Russians came to Siberia, the indigenous peoples had not yet formed integral ethnic communities with an administrative structure. Social networks and administration were restricted to families, and tribal or clan communities. This was due to a certain extent to their geographical isolation and also to the nature of a subsistence family economy.

### **Industrial pollution**

A main feature of the northern regions of the Russian Federation is the co-existence of two diametrically opposed types of economy in a very vulnerable and fragile environment. One is the traditional indigenous lifestyle, attuned with the environment, and the other is the contemporary industrial economy which often leads to the destruction of the environment. Frequently, mineral deposits coincide with reindeer pastures, hunting and fishing grounds and other areas of traditional nature management.

### **Environmental challenges**

Changes in the environment (both ecological systems and social relations, including those between ethnic groups) always require an adequate feedback response. Stress symptoms are frequently caused by exposure to extreme experiences, and in such circumstances an individual can lose control of social aspects of their life. Rapid changes in the environment, which overwhelm previously developed adaptive responses can aggravate the stress. The most destructive 'environmental changes' experienced by the northern indigenous peoples were forced separation of children and parents, prevention of family nomadic lifestyles, and the decline of traditional economic activities and self-administration in communities. Natural disasters and anthropogenic upheavals can both have a seriously deleterious effect on human health.

**“Vulnerable Communities: How has the COVID-19 Pandemic affected Indigenous People in the Russian Arctic?” Pavel Devyatkin, The Arctic Institute, 10 December 2020 [132] <https://www.thearcticinstitute.org/vulnerable-communities-covid-19-pandemic-indigenous-people-russian-arctic/>**

#### Overview:

With the onset of the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic, the world has found itself in a global health emergency, which has caused a dramatic loss of human life worldwide and brought normal life around the world to a halt for the better part of a year. The Arctic Institute's COVID-19 series offers an interesting compilation of best practices, challenges and varied approaches to the pandemic applied by various Arctic states, regions, and communities. We hope that this series will contribute to our understanding of how the region has coped with this unprecedented crisis as well as provide food for thought about possibilities and potential of development of regional cooperation.

#### Current & Relevant Information:

##### **COVID-19 in the North**

Isolation and small population density have allowed the Northern regions of the Arctic states to be relatively safe compared to other parts of the world, but this is not necessarily true in the Russian North. Some of the most severely impacted regions of Russia are in the Arctic. The Yamalo-Nenets Autonomous Okrug has the highest coronavirus cases per capita of all 85 Russian federal subjects and four of the top ten federal subjects by deaths per capita include the Arctic. Murmansk Oblast has a population seven times smaller than that of neighboring Finland or Norway, but the Russian region has more coronavirus cases than either country. What factors explain this great disparity?

It is believed that COVID-19 made its way to the Russian North by workers migrating from across Russia and the former Soviet Union to work at the industrial and extractive projects in the Arctic. One example is Russia's second-largest COVID-19 outbreak in mid-April at the Belokamenka liquefied natural gas plant in Murmansk Oblast. At one point, twenty percent of the 11,000 employees working at the Belokamenka project operated by Novatek, Russia's second-largest natural gas producer, were reported to be infected.

#### N. Sami [Finland/Norway/Russia/Sweden]:

**"The Sami," Northern Norway** [133] <https://nordnorge.com/en/tema/the-sami-are-the-indigenous-people-of-the-north/>

#### Overview:

In the far north of Europe, ancient sounds, unique craftwork traditions, and a particular language live side by side with modern technology. The Sami culture is the oldest culture in large areas of Northern Norway and is currently experiencing a strong renaissance.

#### Current & Relevant Information:

The Sami people live in four countries: Norway, Sweden, Finland, and Russia. The total population in these four countries is estimated at approx. 80,000, of whom

around half live in Norway. Slightly under half of these people talk Sami. In Norway, the Sami people in Norway live in almost all parts of Northern Norway, and in the southern parts of the country in Trøndelag and Femundsmarka in Hedmark.

**“Sami People,” Adam Augustyn, Britannica, 9 December 2024 [134]**

<https://www.britannica.com/topic/Sami>

#### Overview:

Sami, any member of a people speaking the Sami language and inhabiting Lapland and adjacent areas of northern Norway, Sweden, and Finland, as well as the Kola Peninsula of Russia. The three Sami languages, which are mutually unintelligible, are sometimes considered dialects of one language. They belong to the Finno-Ugric branch of the Uralic family. Almost all Sami are now bilingual, and many no longer even speak their native language. In the late 20th century there were from 30,000 to 40,000 Sami in Norway and about 20,000 in Sweden, 6,000 in Finland, and 2,000 in Russia.

#### Current & Relevant Information:

The Sami are the descendants of nomadic peoples who had inhabited northern Scandinavia for thousands of years. When the Finns entered Finland, beginning about AD 100, Sami settlements were probably dispersed over the whole of that country; today they are confined to its northern extremity. In Sweden and Norway, they have similarly been pushed north. The origin of the Sami is obscure; some scholars include them among the Paleo-Siberian peoples; others maintain that they were alpine and came from central Europe.

Reindeer herding was the basis of the Sami economy until very recently. Although the Sami hunted reindeer from the earliest times and kept them in small numbers as pack and decoy animals, full-scale nomadism with large herds began only a few centuries ago. The reindeer-herding Sami lived in tents or turf huts and migrated with their herds in units of five or six families, supplementing their diet along the way by hunting and fishing.

Nomadism, however, has virtually disappeared; the remaining herders now accompany their reindeer alone while their families reside in permanent modern housing. While the reindeer of a unit are herded communally, each animal is individually owned. Many Norwegian Sami are coastal fishermen, and those in other areas depend for their livelihoods on farming, forestry, freshwater fishing, and mining or on government, industrial, and commercial employment in cities and towns. Sami increasingly participate in the Scandinavian professional, cultural, and academic world.

The Skolt Sami of Finland (and perhaps also the Russian Sami) belong to the Russian Orthodox faith; most others are Lutheran. The shaman was important in non-Christian Sami society, and some shamanistic healing rites are still performed.

There is, at least in most of the northern Sami communities, a strong evangelical congregationalism (Laestadianism), in which local congregations are virtually autonomous.

The Scandinavian countries periodically tried to assimilate the Sami, and the use of the Sami languages in schools and public life was long forbidden. In the second half of the 20th century, however, attention was drawn to the problems of the Sami minority, which became more assertive in efforts to maintain its traditional society and culture through the use of Sami in schools and the protection of reindeer pastures. In each country there are Sami political and cultural societies, and there are a few Sami newspapers and radio programs. See also Lapland.

**“Sami in Sweden,” sweden.se, 17 July 2024 [135]**  
<https://sweden.se/life/people/sami-in-sweden>

#### Overview:

The Sami are one of the world's indigenous peoples and one of Sweden's official national minorities.

Sami country – known as Sápmi – stretches across the northern parts of Sweden, Norway and Finland, and Russia's Kola Peninsula. The original settlement was even larger, but the indigenous Sami were gradually forced to give up land, first to farmers starting in the 1650s and later to industries such as forestry and mining.

There is no census for the Sami, but the population is estimated at around 80,000 people, spread over four countries with at least 20,000 in Sweden, 50,000 in Norway, 8,000 in Finland and 2,000 in Russia.

Being one of Sweden's official national minorities means – in short – that the Sami have special rights and that Swedish law protects their culture, traditions and languages.

It wasn't until 1977 that the Sami were recognised by the Swedish parliament as an indigenous people.

#### Current & Relevant Information:

##### **Reindeer husbandry traditions**

Originally hunters and gatherers, the Sami turned to herding of domesticated reindeer in the 17th century. Reindeer naturally move across huge tracks of land to graze, and the Sami historically lived lives following the herds.

The modern norm is instead to have a permanent home and a cabin in the mountains for the herding season. And those who remain in the business have long since replaced the skis with snowmobiles, AWD vehicles and helicopters. Only some ten per cent of Swedish Sami earn a living from the reindeer industry, and many supplements their income through tourism, fishing, crafts and other trades.



Many have been forced to look for income elsewhere as a result of ongoing challenges to the reindeer trade, including disputes with the government over grazing rights, restrictions as to who may legally be involved in reindeer husbandry, and loss of land.

There's a historical dispute between reindeer herders' grazing rights and landowners' logging rights. In 2011, the Supreme Court ruled in favor of the Sami, giving them common law rights to a specific area of land.

There's a historical dispute between reindeer herders' grazing rights and landowners' logging rights. In 2011, the Supreme Court ruled in favour of the Sami, giving them common law rights to a specific area of land.

### **'Sami village'**

A sameby – 'Sami village' – is not a traditional village but a complex economic and administrative union within a specific geographical area. Its members have the right to engage in reindeer husbandry in this area, including building whatever facilities they need. In certain areas they also have fishing and hunting rights. It is regulated by a Swedish law called the Reindeer Husbandry Act ([link in Swedish](#)). There are 51 Sami villages, the largest one being Sirges in Jokkmokk.

Towards the end of the 19th century, many Sami permanently kept both farms and reindeer (mixed husbandry). The government, however, would make some contentious decisions, the repercussions of which extended well into the 20th century.

The Reindeer Pasture Law of 1928 limited reindeer ownership and membership in any Sami village to herders and their families. The new restrictions forced mixed husbandry farmers to choose between reindeer herding or other forms of agriculture.

For generations, people have been turning to other professions, and the Sami are trying to ease government regulations so people can belong to a Sami village without having to own reindeer.

### **Truth and reconciliation**

The Sami have long been in contact with the nation states that were established on the land they called home. Through these encounters, the Sami have been forced to change their way of life. It's a history filled with abuses, violations and racism.

In November 2021, the Swedish government announced that it was setting up a truth commission that will review the history of Sweden's policies toward the Sami and the effect these policies have had on the Sami people. The assignment runs until 1 December 2025.

Back in 2019, the Sami Parliament had submitted its formal request to the government for a truth and reconciliation commission to be established. The year

after, the Sami were awarded 1.2 million crowns (EUR 144,000) from the Swedish state to lay the groundwork for the truth commission.

### **Official church apology**

In 2021, the Church of Sweden made an official apology to the Sami people for historical abuses. The apology was delivered by Archbishop Antje Jackelén at the General Synod's special service of worship on 24 November in Uppsala Cathedral.

On 23 October 2022, Jackelén delivered another official apology, at the Sáagastallamat 2 conference in Luleå Cathedral.

Furthermore, the Church of Sweden's central board is allocating SEK 40 million in strategic development funds for reconciliation processes during 2022–2031.

The church will draw up an action plan for the ten-year period in close dialogue with the Sami Council of the Church of Sweden.

### **The Sami Parliament**

The organized Sami political work for autonomy began in the 1950s with the establishment of Sami associations that eventually lead to the establishment of Sametinget (Sami Parliament) in 1993. Sametinget is both a parliament and a government agency.

As a government agency with around 50 civil servants, the Sami Parliament has the daily responsibility of taking care of tasks concerning Sami culture, languages and Sami industries such as reindeer herding. It serves directly under the Swedish Ministry of Cultural Affairs.

The parliament is made up of 31 members, elected for four years. They convene three times a year. Those on the Sami electoral register – open to those who speak Sami and define themselves as part of Sami society – are eligible to vote.

According to statistics from Sametinget ([link in Swedish](#)), the numbers registering to vote have increased every election year since the first election in 1993. The last election, on 16 May 2021, had a voting list of 9,220.

### **Greater autonomy**

Historically, one political goal has united all the political parties in Sametinget: greater autonomy.

Sweden's constitution was amended in 2011 to affirm the obligation of public power in Sweden to promote the opportunities of the Sami people to preserve and develop a cultural and social life of their own.

In 2011, Sweden amended its constitution to affirm the obligation of public power in Sweden to promote the opportunities of the Sami people to preserve and develop a cultural and social life of their own.

The Sami parliaments in Finland, Norway and Sweden have drawn up a joint Nordic convention to strengthen their position as an indigenous people and influence decisions on Sami-related matters. The Nordic governments have not yet approved the convention.

**“Sami Facts,” Cultural Survival, 9 June 2010 [136]**

<https://www.culturalsurvival.org/publications/cultural-survival-quarterly/sami-facts>

Overview:

- The Sámi define themselves as an Indigenous People, as stated in the International Labor Organization (ILO) Convention 169: “Peoples in independent countries who are regarded as indigenous on account of their descent from the populations which inhabited the country, or a geographical region to which the country belongs, at the time of conquest or colonization or the establishment of present state boundaries.” The ILO is a specialized agency of the United Nations.

Current & Relevant Information:

- As far back as recorded history we know that Sámi people have lived in the Nordic countries and on Kola Peninsula in Russia, where Sámi still live today. It is estimated that about 40,000 Sámi live in Norway, 20,000 in Sweden, 7,500 in Finland, and 2,000 in Russia. For the most part, language and self-identification are the ethnic criteria used in all countries with Sámi inhabitants.
- The Sámi have depended on hunting, fishing, farming, and reindeer herding, and have been semi-nomadic. Today only 2 percent of Sámi work in the reindeer industry.
- The Sámi language is part of the Finno-Ugric branch of the Uralic language. There are several dialects of Sámi, and people who speak them may not understand each other.
- The Sámi parliament, Samediggi, was established by law in 1987 and opened by the King of Norway in 1989. The assembly has 39 members chosen by direct elections based on census numbers. The Sámi parliament is the authoritative advisory agency in issues regarding the Sámi people, but has no legal or executive power. The parliament is located in a beautiful building in Karasjok shaped like a gamme, or the old earthen huts where the Sámi used to live.
- The Sámi are organized in several large organizations in Norway and through common Nordic organizations. The Sámi Council assembles the largest organizations in the Nordic countries and works to advance Sámi interests.
- The Sámi are represented at the UN by the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues; in the Barents Euro-Arctic Council, which includes Norway, Sweden, and Finland as well as the surrounding areas of Russia; and in the Arctic Council.

- The Sámi in Norway, Sweden, Finland, and Russia have their own flag, which was approved in 1986. Today the Sámi people celebrate Sámi People's Day on February 6.

### Social Issues:

**“Effects of Global Ecological Change on Arctic Council Permanent Participants,” Erica Dingman, et al., German Institute of Development and Sustainability, 2014**

[137] <https://www.idos-research.de/en/others-publications/article/effects-of-global-ecological-change-on-arctic-council-permanent-participants/>

### Overview:

Northern communities are highly vulnerable to Global Ecological Change (GEC): The Arctic is known as the region experiencing climate change twice as fast as other world regions. Arctic communities need to adapt to environmental changes caused by sea ice melt, natural changes such as variations in population and migration of wildlife, and contaminants in traditional foods. The new accessibility of Arctic regions has also opened up new economic opportunities (mining, oil and gas exploration, tourism and shipping), which pose additional environmental risks.

In the Arctic Council, an intergovernmental forum formed by the Arctic-rim states in 1996 to improve cooperation with regard to climate protection and security and to enhance the relation between Arctic-states and the indigenous peoples living in the Arctic, six indigenous peoples organizations have status of Permanent Participants: The Aleut International Association (AIA), the Arctic Athabaskan Council (AAC), the Gwich'in Council International (GCI), the Inuit Circumpolar Council (ICC), the Russian Association of Indigenous Peoples of the North (RAIPON) and the Saami Council (SC). Although they do not have voting (but consultation) rights, they represent 500,000 indigenous peoples living in the Arctic regions of Russia, Norway, Finland, Sweden, Denmark (Greenland), Canada, Iceland and the U.S at Arctic Council meetings and are recognized as full participants in all Arctic Council working groups. Although the ability of each community to cope and to adapt to GEC differs depending on the regional location and community setting, all of them need to respond in particular to the changes caused by humans in the Arctic. Through the indigenous peoples' organizations, they address the Arctic Council member-states to consider their positions. The following papers provide an overview on their positions on tourism, resource extraction and shipping in the Arctic region as can be found in the policy- and strategy papers of the six Permanent Participants to the Arctic Council.

### Current & Relevant Information:

The Saami Council is a Sami non-governmental organization that has member organizations in Finland, Russia, Norway and Sweden. It was founded in 1956. Another important formal Sami organization is the Saami Parliament. To understand

the stances and activities of the Sami people it is important to familiarize oneself with their history and current activities. According to United Nations Regional Information Centre (UNRIC),

The Sami are the indigenous people living in the very north of Europe, in Sápmi, which stretches across the northern parts of Norway, Sweden, Finland and the Kola Peninsula. They are a minority in today's Finland, Russia, Sweden and Norway, but a majority in the innermost parts of Finnmark county in Norway and in the municipality of Utsjoki in Finland. However, although regarded as one people, there are several kinds of Sami based on their patterns of settlement and how they sustain themselves. Furthermore, their rights and general situation differ considerably depending on the nation state within which they live.

About 9,000 people identify as Sami in Finland, about 2,000 in Russia, 15,000-20,000 in Sweden, and about 60,000 in Norway. In general, it can be said that tourism provides a significant livelihood for Sami people. It is extremely challenging and controversial to condense the stances held by the Sami population towards development, since tourism is seen as source of living on the one hand, but on the other as a phenomenon that makes traditional ways of life into a commercial product. In general, it can be said that the Sami population is very concerned about how existing and planned Arctic resource extraction as well as shipping affects the northern environment that is their historical home area.

**“The challenges of the Sámi,” Omair Ahmad, The Third Pole, 10 February 2017**

[138] <https://www.thethirdpole.net/en/climate/the-challenges-of-the-sami/>

#### Overview:

At the Arctic Frontiers conference Aslak Holmberg, a member of the Finnish Sámi Parliament, spoke about the challenges that the Sámi – the northernmost indigenous tribe – are faced with.

#### Current & Relevant Information:

What are the main issues that you deal with?

Always the main issue is our rights to land and water. There are competing claims on the lands where we live, and are necessary for our way of life; for example, from oil companies. It is a challenge to maintain our culture, to resist being merely integrated or assimilated into wider societies. We have our own cultural identity, our own language and ways of maintaining our livelihood, and a separate way of looking at the world. We want to preserve that.

How difficult is it to do that?

Very. Like all indigenous people our main problem is that we do not have states of our own. We have to struggle to gain recognition to lands and territories. We have to fight to retain control over the ownership of our traditional knowledge, our ability to

manage our society. Unfortunately, the Sámi Parliaments do not have much power. We decide on issues that states want us to decide on. They listen to us, but we have no power to veto. Our budget is basically for study material for the languages that the Sámi speak (three languages in Finland), for kindergarten schools – which we see as “language nests”, and cultural funds to support artists.

What are your main challenges for the future?

We worry about the oil companies. There is oil in Sámi lands, in the coastal areas of Norway, for example. There are large movements opposing drilling, and this requires direct action. The politicians have not so far responded to this. It is not much of a topic in Finland. We will have to work to change that. The Nordic Sámi Convention has been finally agreed on, and we hope that it is ratified soon by all the states.

**“Sami land rights and policy-driven recognition threats,” Dawn Heaps, University of Washington, 27 June 2019 [139] <https://jsis.washington.edu/news/sami-land-rights-and-policy-driven-recognition-threats/>**

#### Overview:

Pride in one’s homeland typically begins with a framework comprised of a storied history, as well as common labor practices through the ages, language and shared personal traditions. Across the world, this fact is true. Yet, we see time and time again governments denying a smaller population the ability to have pride in their culture. The reason typically comes down to economics. Indigenous people in the Arctic face particularly hard challenges, as they may not solely identify or swear allegiance to the ruling governing party. One very unique group of Indigenous people found in the Arctic region is the Sami people (also spelled Saami). The Sami established themselves as a distinct ethnic group in Scandinavia around 2,000 years ago. Yet, still today, the history of the Sami people is deeply rooted in their way of life. The Sami are the descendants of nomadic peoples who inhabited northern Scandinavia. Their background is varied. The origin of the Sami is obscure; some scholars include them among the Paleo-Siberian peoples; others maintain that they were alpine and came from central Europe. The Sami (Sámi) people, who live in the far north of Europe, have never had a sovereign state of their own. Currently, the Sami people live and migrate within four countries: Norway, Sweden, Finland, and Russia. Approximately 80,000 Sami people live in these four countries; however, around half live in almost all parts of Norway. Although the genetic origin of the Sámi people is complex and difficult to trace, their beginnings link closest with the origin of the Finns. There is a common consensus that the Sámi inhabited the region first, before their Indo-European neighbors; however, the genetic origin of the groups, their natural history and the diversion of the language are issues that are heavily debated. Modern days now see governmental and economic parameters concerning resources redefined.

#### Current & Relevant Information:

Should the current governments of Norway, Finland, Sweden, and Russia allow the Sami people an equal say when making legislative decisions concerning lands, resources, water rights, and self-determination? Would this right envelop the Sami people into the already, slightly differing cultures in which they reside? Should current governments understand that past traditions rights in today's societies? Recognition is not a new gesture. The first recognition of Sámi rights occurred in 1751 with an amendment to the border agreement between Sweden and Norway, known as the Lapp Codicil. This amendment allowed for the free passage of Sámi between the two countries, and in doing so respected a pre-existing right to access land on both sides of the border. Previously, the Sami's way of life was a nomadic one. A main staple for their livelihood and economic sustainability has come in the form of reindeer herding. Until recently, the Sami economy relied on this one source to live. This lifestyle saw full-scale nomadism, seeing the Sami living in tents or turf huts and migrating with the animals between five or six Sami families. This situation exists to a degree in modern day, but has subsided as they return to their residences throughout the working year. Herding reindeer and reindeer husbandry provided for the Sami people as, throughout the year, thinning of a herd would provide meat to eat, hides to make into clothing and shoes to wear and sell. Every part of the animal is effectively used. A state of interdependence that serves to keep individuals connected to sharing-networks is maintained through continuous expression of various needs, pressing or not (Duhaime & Bernard, pg. 159). Keeping and maintaining such amounts of reindeer requires swaths of land for grazing and migrating. The major issue is the idea of ownership and rights of lands. The history of the Sami herding reindeer saw them follow their herds through what is now northern Norway, Sweden, and Finland. It is very difficult to prove the location of "traditional" lands today, seeing many of modern-day claims center on "tax lands" taken by the Swedish crown during the mid-1800s settlement of Lapland. Herding reindeer is one element that has shown itself incredibly difficult under the legislation of any country, as at the heart of recognition as a people and land and water rights is the deep connection the Sami people have with Mother Nature. They have used lands but have never claimed land.

There have been many debates undertaken whether the Sami people have rights granted to them as a people. As times change, so too do laws and requirements for corporations to run their businesses. Currently, a major disagreement has grown over Norway going ahead with the largest on-shore constructed wind farm around the region of Storheia, named Fosen Wind, to be constructed on lands the Sami have used for reindeer herding activities. This economic decision by Norway undercuts livelihood of the Sami and disregards understanding of the Sami as recognized Indigenous people within the country. Norway's Petroleum and Energy Ministry, however, said it would proceed with the wind park, which is being developed by the Fosen Wind consortium, owned by Statkraft (the Norwegian State Energy Company) and Nordic Wind Power, a consortium of European investors including Credit Suisse and BKW Energy. This situation has persisted despite a



December 10, 2018 letter from the United Nations Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination that asked Norway to suspend the project so it could examine a complaint that the project would disturb reindeer herding, a traditional activity of the Sami people. What makes the Sami people's story so unique is the way their way of life intertwines so completely with nature, animals, as well as how they express their culture and choose to do so and, as they have done, govern their way of life for thousands of years. Adding as the most prominent work the Sami have incorporated into their livelihoods includes freshwater fishing, trapping, forestry, and also mining. Power plays by governments often include land use or restrictive declarations. More than ten years ago, Norwegian laws capped sizes of reindeer herds in the name to prevent overgrazing. One herder, Mr. Jovsset Ante Sara, refuses to abide by these laws that he would need to cull his 350-400 reindeer herd down to 75. He is suing the government. His reasoning? "I sued because I could not accept to see my culture die," he states.

The connection the Sami have to their work within the elements that make up their culture runs deep. Their religion, their joik—a representational type of cultural expression, a type of song tradition that is one of the Sami's distinct cultural features – (Olsen, pg. 119) ties in with the importance of their religion, their language, traditional clothing, their work practices and sense of community. Customs, religious beliefs, traditional rules and social morality are often better regulators of human behavior than state law. The laws of Indigenous people are part of their cosmologies, like a circle (Heinamaki, pg. 42). Their longevity as a people should give them rights to lands to use as they have for centuries. Some governments do not agree. This distinctiveness of culture has come into play in modern times, as the Sami people have asserted their rights for access and usage of natural resources.

In 1956, the Sami Council was founded (Saami Council). The Sami Council, along with five other representative organizations of Indigenous peoples, has Permanent Participant status at the Arctic Council – the most important intergovernmental body in the Arctic region. Sami policy has never been directed toward the establishment of a separate Sami nation state. Instead, it has concentrated more on establishing rights that will assure the survival and growth of the Sami and their culture in their ancestral areas of settlement. It is stated in the amendment to the Norwegian constitution this desire is "for the Sami to develop their language, their culture, and their communal life." This idea has concentrated more on establishing rights that will ensure survival and growth of the Sami and their culture in their own ancestral areas of settlement (Girji, pg. 9).

As a result of the Norwegian parliament (Sortinget) passing the Saami Act in 1987, regulations regarding language placed the Sami language on the same level with Norwegian within the designated Sami language administration area. Special regulations were appended to the Saami Act in 1992, one of which confirmed Saami as an official language in Norway (Wheelersburg, pg. 18). In 1957, the ILO

developed and ratified Indigenous and Tribal Populations Convention, 1957 (No. 107), an international instrument dedicated to improving the living conditions of Indigenous peoples worldwide. In 1989, ILO Convention 107 was revised and renamed Indigenous and Tribal Peoples Convention, 1989 (No. 169). Convention 169 recognizes Indigenous peoples' right to self-determination within a nation-state, while setting standards for national governments regarding Indigenous peoples' economic, socio-cultural and political rights, including the right to a land base. The convention is law within the nation-states that have ratified it. Norway was the first to ratify the International Labour Organization Convention, also known as ILO-convention 169. Finland, Sweden, and Russia have yet to ratify ILO Convention number 169. This makes securing land rights in Finland more difficult as 90 percent of the Finnish Sami land belongs to the government. But as stated before, the Sami fear assimilation into any particular country's population. They simply wish to keep their own culture alive. Nevertheless, since the beginning of the seventeenth century, the question about Sami resource rights and their legal status has most often been debated and formulated in relation to the legal systems of the states in which they found themselves. These systems are increasingly applied to the jurisdiction of the state authorities as a result of colonization and the drawing of borders. Thus, the question of Sami rights must be considered relatively, in relation to which legal system or which set of legal conceptions one refers (Hansen, pg. 277). Despite the Sami people achieving recognition, there are no Sami reserve lands or title lands, equivalent to those established in Canada, nor any historical treaties with the Sami. Today there are many international documents that secure participatory rights for Indigenous peoples, among which Articles 6 and 7 of ILO Convention No. 169, which are legally binding to its parties, figure prominently. Consultations do not, however, allow for "veto power" over developments. On the whole, it has been difficult for Norway, Finland, and Sweden to acknowledge the legacy of their colonization of traditional Sami areas.

With such a rich history and contributions from the Sami to their relating countries, in addition to having a Sami Parliament represented from Norway, Finland, Sweden, and Russia, their voice being discredited on a legal scale is an offense to their people and a short-sided approach to a bettered national climate. Sweden and Finland first should give legislative recognition by ratifying ILO Convention 169, having each of the four governments in question giving the representatives of the Sami people a 'veto power' when debate is being had. Governments taking advantage of resources the Sami use is a political economic-grab that places a chokehold on the self-determining Sami people.

**“Discrimination of the Sami – the rights of the Sami from a discrimination perspective,” Heidi Pikkarainen, Ombudsmannen mot etnisk diskriminering Report, 2008 [140]**

[https://www2.ohchr.org/english/issues/indigenous/ExpertMechanism/3rd/docs/contributions/SwedishEqualityOmbudsman\\_2.pdf](https://www2.ohchr.org/english/issues/indigenous/ExpertMechanism/3rd/docs/contributions/SwedishEqualityOmbudsman_2.pdf)

### Overview:

Sweden recognized the Sami as an indigenous people in 1977. As such the Sami enjoy special protection and are granted innate rights under Swedish law, as well as through international conventions and declarations. The realization of these rights is part of Sweden's obligations to respect human rights. However, research has shown that prejudice and racist conceptions have characterized Swedish Sami policy over the years, thus indirectly influencing the Sami today.

There is little research and few other studies designed to illustrate the Sami people's situation in Sweden today from a discrimination perspective. In 1998 the Ombudsman against Ethnic Discrimination (DO) commissioned Professor Anders Lange of the Centre for Research in International Migration and Ethnic Relations (CEIFO) to conduct a questionnaire and interview study into ethnic discrimination of the Sami. The study investigated self-perceived discrimination among the Sami and produced disquieting information regarding the Sami experience of threats, harassment and discrimination. The Sami have also indicated in contacts with the DO various ways that discrimination and insults linked to their ethnic background are part of their everyday life. In spite of this the Sami are hardly inclined to report discrimination.

Against this background, the DO has been conducting a project since 2007 specifically aimed at visualizing the Sami perceptions of discrimination. The European Commission against Racism and Intolerance (ECRI) has emphasized the importance of identifying and exposing perceptions of discrimination and racism against indigenous peoples. The European Union requires that equal treatment agencies conduct independent investigations, publish reports on and make recommendations regarding issues concerning discrimination. The DO considers exposure of the Sami discrimination experience as an important first step towards achieving a change. Without knowledge of their situation, it is not possible to propose action that can promote the human rights of the Sami.

The principal working strategy has been development of mutual knowledge. The aim is to increase knowledge of rights and work against discrimination in the Sami community, while knowledge of the Sami living conditions is deepened and made visible at the Office of the Ombudsman against Ethnic Discrimination and in the rest of Swedish society. This report presents experiences from this project.

### Current & Relevant Information:

The purpose of this report is to contribute knowledge of the Sami situation today by revealing the Sami discrimination experience and to propose measures to prevent and counteract discrimination of the Sami. The report is intended to serve as a basis for the continuing work of the DO, the new Ombudsman agency and other actors to prevent and counteract discrimination of the Sami.

Research shows that when problems have been formulated and solutions proposed, the Sami have been described on the basis of the majority society's conceptions and its negative opinions of the Sami and the Sami culture. Examples include the race biology research carried out on the Sami, the State's Sami policy, the reindeer husbandry legislation, the nomad schools and the Lapp sheriff system. These are expressions of structural discrimination and show how such structures can contribute to stigmatize and subordinate the Sami in relation to the majority society.

It is quite clear from the DO's dialogue with the Sami that the State's policy and the structures that have been created over the years continue to affect the Sami conditions today. The Sami have only limited possibilities for influencing their own life conditions and the discrimination means that the Sami are not treated as individuals, but are categorized on the basis of negative conceptions of the Sami as a group. The Sami have experienced discrimination in all areas of society. The Government, county councils and municipalities, who are tasked with promoting the Sami rights, are responsible for counteracting these conceptions. In order to address this, it is necessary for state and municipal authorities to facilitate Sami influence and participation in matters that concern Sami using the Sami rights as an indigenous people and a national minority as the starting point. This is necessary not only to ensure that Sweden adheres to a greater extent to its undertakings regarding Sami participation according to international human rights law, but also in that way to reduce the foundations of the discriminating structures in the long term.

**“Sami responses to poverty in the Nordic countries,” Christian Jakob Burmeister Hicks and Ande Somby, [arctichealth.org](https://arctichealth.org/en/list?q=Sami+responses+to+poverty+in+the+Nordic+countries&p=1&ps=20) [141]**

<https://arctichealth.org/en/list?q=Sami+responses+to+poverty+in+the+Nordic+countries&p=1&ps=20>

#### Overview:

The Sami are the indigenous people of Fenno-Scandinavia (Norway, Sweden and Finland) and the Kola Peninsula (north-western Russia). This chapter deals exclusively with the Sami of Fenno-Scandinavia owing to the contrasting economic conditions of the Fenno-Scandinavian Sami and those of the Kola Peninsula. The Fenno-Scandinavian or 'Nordic' Sami live in highly developed social welfare systems with governments that allow for greater autonomy than the Russian government. The Kola Sami do not share the same benefits as other Sami, owing to the limited political and economic control they have in Russia. The control that the Russian central government and the global markets hold over the Kola Sami makes it difficult for significant economic improvement even today.

There are also differences in the political and social situations of the Finnish, Swedish and Norwegian Sami. For instance, although the Finnish Sami do not have nearly such expansive rights as the Norwegian Sami, they did establish the first Sami parliament ten years before the Norwegian Sami and twenty before the

Swedish Sami. The Finnish Sami also receive many of the same political privileges as the Norwegian Sami. Yet in Finland the Sami argue that there are no Sami-specific laws to secure them additional rights through their indigenous status. In Norway, there are language laws that do allow the Sami greater latitude to teach their own language. In Sweden, on the other hand, Sami are far more disadvantaged legally than either of their eastern or western neighbors. Countless court rulings have gone against the Sami, despite the fact that prior to the nineteenth century Swedish Sami received the same rights as other citizens.

This chapter will first trace the history of the Nordic Sami within the context of their current political/economic situation. It will then discuss their mechanisms and strategies for poverty alleviation within Finland, Norway and Sweden. The Nordic Sami have been extremely successful in their use of two distinctly different but co-dependent strategies. The first strategy has been to create a common Sami identity and culture during the last half-century and utilize the Nordic sense of morality and human rights to attract support for the Sami as a people. In this way, the Sami have effectively increased their ability to combat the social and economic ills that have plagued them for centuries. This strategy includes the use of public and governmental ethical principles to create pressure for increased rights and funding for the Sami, in order to correct and protect against poverty in northern Scandinavia. As an approach to combating poverty, this first strategy involves a range of activities that can together be termed 'cultural strengthening'. The second strategy is the Sami's effective use of the collective financial resources available from different sources, including ministries of the national government, municipal governments and Sami organizations.

#### Current & Relevant Information:

### **Conclusion**

Throughout the Sami's history, there has been a constant internal and external duality between being 'Sami' and being 'Nordic'. Nevertheless, many Sami and non-Sami alike argue that one cannot be Sami and Nordic, leading to ideological and social struggles between groups. Without distinct and shared cultural traits, the Sami would not be as socially and economically advantaged as they are now. This struggle to maintain Sami cultural distinction is not a new struggle, but a product of the last fifty years' advances in codifying cultural differences by the Sami leadership and others, in order to protect the Sami people. Owing to the current climate of acceptance of ethnic or at least cultural variation in the Nordic countries, Sami people are in a better situation than any other minority group in Scandinavia. This translates into direct economic advantage as well as cultural acceptance. Many Sami leaders are satisfied with the gains they have made for Sami rights. They have managed to protect and promote their rights to education, language and self-determination. In turn, they have protected their communities through careful and effective strategies to combat poverty.

Despite the optimism on the part of many Sami leaders, however, and the significant achievement made by Sami in protecting their language, culture, livelihood and political rights, some in the Sami leadership feel that essential rights go unacknowledged. As late as April 2000, Sami leaders were still using the UN platform to call for recognition of their rights. Lars Anders Baer declared before the Working Group on Indigenous Populations (WGIP): 'The Norwegian authorities, by failing to recognize and protect our fundamental rights on our traditional territory, have violated Articles 1 and 27 of the Covenant [International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights]' (Baer 2000: 2). Given the atrocities and conditions Sami and other indigenous people have had to bear in modern states, the sentiments portrayed by Mr. Baer are understandable. Even in the states of Norway, Sweden and Finland, where human rights have become precious ideals, racism and discrimination persist.

But what does all this mean for the Sami and more broadly for indigenous peoples' ability to combat poverty in their own communities? Perhaps the most universal and salient lesson that can be learned from the Nordic Sami experience is that through identifying themselves as a distinct but non-threatening community within the national cultural identity, the Nordic Sami have been able to secure a viable economic future for themselves. The Sami of Norway, Sweden and Finland have taught their respective countries the significance of not only recognizing but embracing and protecting cultural differences. This lesson is just now extending beyond the issue of indigenous people within Scandinavia, to issues involving new immigrants and linguistic minorities as well. In nations where homogeneity is promoted and preserved with such vehemence, difference is now also seen as a source of national pride. Certainly, a lesson can be learned from the Scandinavian experience.

An extension of the Sami's success in promoting their cultural difference is the Nordic Sami organization's procurement of financial resources. These resources have been for their own benefit, as well as that of future generations of Sami and indigenous peoples at large. In the Nordic experience, at least, difference is an effective mechanism for poverty mitigation.

**"Norway Sami," Minority Rights Group International** [\[142\]](https://minorityrights.org/minorities/sami-2/)  
<https://minorityrights.org/minorities/sami-2/>

#### Overview:

Sami (previously known as Lapps, a name they consider derogatory) are the indigenous inhabitants of northern Norway, Sweden and Finland, and the far north-west and north-east of Russia. In Norway they are concentrated mainly in Finnmark County, where there are some 25,000 out of an estimated 40,000 Norwegian Sami. Within the prevailing unity of Sami ethnic identity exist linguistic, economic and cultural group distinctions.

An estimated 20,000 Sami in Norway speak one of its three Finno-Ugric dialects. Sami is in everyday use in the northern core area and is now an official language in five municipalities in Finnmark County and one municipality in Troms County; it is therefore also an official language in the courts. In coastal and other areas, however, the language is losing ground to Norwegian.

Current & Relevant Information:

**Current issues**

The reindeer is central to Sami culture and the continuation of herding is regarded as essential to the survival of Sami identity. While the modernization of reindeer herding may offer new opportunities to Sami, the shrinking of their herding lands, coupled with environmental damage, threatens the continuation of this way of life. The so called 'East Sami' who live along the border with Russia and Finland are particularly affected by these developments. Under Norwegian law, the 'East Sami' are entitled to herd their reindeer. However, there are few reindeer grazing-sites left for them to use, and those that remain are being encroached upon by the 'Sea-Sami'. The UN Human Rights Committee has urged the Norwegian government to designate an area along the Neiden River known as Neiden-siida for the sole use of the 'East Sami', thus far without effect. Although the 'East Sami' are not represented in the Norwegian Sami Assembly, the Sami Assembly is nevertheless responsible for promoting their interests. Yet the Sami Assembly has so far failed to lobby for this proposal or indeed to bring the 'East Sami' case before ILO bodies.

O. Yukagir [Russia]:

**"Yukaghir people," Britannica, 6 November 2019 [143]**

<https://www.britannica.com/topic/Yukaghir>

Overview:

Yukaghir, also spelled Yukagir or Jukagir, self-name Odul, remnant of an ancient human population of the tundra and taiga zones of Arctic Siberia east of the Lena River in Russia, an area with one of the most severe climates in the inhabited world. Brought close to extinction by privation, encroachment, and diseases introduced by other groups, they numbered some 1,100 in the late 20th century. Although they still generally inhabit the upper valley of the Kolyma River, the once-nomadic people are for the most part engaged in hunting, fishing, and reindeer herding. The domestication of reindeer probably started in the mid-17th century, just before Russian conquest.

Current & Relevant Information:

The Yukaghir can be classified into two divisions—the Northern, or Tundra, and the Southern, or Kolyma, Yukaghir. Their dialects are not mutually intelligible, and (until the late 20th century) multilingualism in several combinations of Russian, Chukchi,



Even, and Sakha (Yakut) was common. Few of the younger Yukaghir speak their mother tongue, and because of assimilation they are generally monolingual or bilingual in Sakha or Russian.

The Yukaghir economy once depended heavily on seasonal migrations of elk and wild reindeer; these were killed in large numbers from canoes at water crossings or tracked by ancient methods. Fishing, next in importance, was based on biannual runs in major rivers. Molting waterfowl also were taken in quantity. The meat supply was supplemented by the gathering of berries, nuts, and other products of trees and shrubs. The groups' activities involved cooperative methods and seasonal movements. Permanent homes were occupied only in winter; skin or bark shelters were used in warmer weather. Metal was rare, and most implements were of bone or antler.

The Northern Yukaghir were patrilocal (centered on the male's family) while the Southern Yukaghir were matrilineal. Inheritance in both groups was patrilineal. Small family groups were generally organized into clans. Each clan was guided in matters of food provision and clan defense by an able adult male. Although the Yukaghir were Christianized in the 18th century, they retained many traditional beliefs, including the practice of shamanism.

**“Yukagir in Russia,” Keith Carey, Joshua Project [144]**

[https://joshuaproject.net/people\\_groups/16068/RS](https://joshuaproject.net/people_groups/16068/RS)

#### Overview:

Like most of the other peoples of Siberia, the Yukagirs were hunters who traded furs. They had bi-yearly hunting expeditions which they timed for when reindeer migrated across local rivers. They used bones and rocks for their arrow heads. In the 1400s they began to have access to metal which improved their hunting tools. Because of their belief in the spirit world, they would not kill more game than they needed.

The Russians invaded their land in the 1700s and demanded furs as tribute. Since the Yukagir people were depended on the land, they suffered from frequent famines. The Russians made the situation far worse by using up the local resources. For example, their dogs ate up fish that Yukagir people needed. The local ecology could not support these changes.

#### Current & Relevant Information:

##### **Where Are they Located?**

They are the remnants of a population who for many years have inhabited the tundra and taiga zones of Arctic Siberia. Over the centuries they have braved severe weather and survived. Most of them still live in the northeastern part of Russia's Siberia.

### **What Are Their Lives Like?**

The Yukagir family groups are usually organized into clans, and an able adult male leads each clan. At one time they were matriarchal, with the line of descent coming from the mother's family line. It is unclear if this is still the case. At one time there were either 12 or 13 Yukagir tribes. Now there are only three.

Today there is some effort to keep their language alive; Yukagirs maintain their greetings and certain vocabulary for festivals. As of 1990, their children were taught their traditional language in school. For the most part, they use the Russian language, especially with outsiders.

### **What Are Their Beliefs?**

In the 18th century many Yukagir people became Orthodox Christians; however, they still held onto traditional shamanistic beliefs. Some are probably secular. A small number are now Russian Orthodox, and a much smaller number are Evangelical.

### **What Are Their Needs?**

The Yukagir people need to find ways to earn a prosperous living in the 21st century. Their homeland will not allow many of them to live by hunting, etc. In such situations, many people wind up working as day laborers, and not earning enough money.

“The Yukaghirs,” eki.ee [145] <https://arhiiv.eki.ee/books/redbook/yukaghirs.shtml>

#### Overview:

The Yukaghir from the Upper Kolyma Valley call themselves Odul, those from the Alazeya call themselves Vadul, and those from the Indigirka call themselves Dutke, Dutkil and Buguch. The name Yukaghir is considered to be a generic name of Tungus origin meaning the 'icy or frozen people'. However, there are also some other interpretations and Y. Kreinovich, for instance, claims that the origin of the word is unclear.

#### Current & Relevant Information:

**Habitat.** As recently as the beginning of the 17th century, the Yukaghirs were over a large territory in North-Eastern Siberia -- from the lower reaches of the River Lena in the west to the middle and upper reaches of the River Anadyr in the east, and from the Arctic Ocean in the north to the Verkhoyansk Mountains in the south. It has been suggested that the early Yukaghir (the Yukaghir-Chuvan tribes) inhabited areas further to the west and to the south. In the 12th or the 13th century the Tungus people (the Evens and the Evenks) invaded Northern Siberia, coming from the mountain taigas behind Lake Baikal. It may be assumed that the Tungus and the Yukaghir met near the River Vilyui and the lower Aldan. Probably part of the

Yukaghir moved still further to the north: to the upper Yana, Indigirka, Kolyma and Anadyr rivers, and into the forests and the tundra. A part of them intermingled with the Tungus.

Today, a small number of the Yukaghir live in the Nizhnekolymsk district in Yakutia (the Forest Yukaghir or the Odul) and in the Srednekansk district in the Magadan region (the Tundra Yukaghir or the Vadul).

**Population.** According to 1970 census data the Yukaghir numbered 600 and according to 1979 census data their number was 835. Of these 37.5 % were native language speakers.

**“Yukagir,” Innokenti S. Gurvich, Encyclopedia.com, 3 December 2024 [146]**  
<https://www.encyclopedia.com/humanities/encyclopedias-almanacs-transcripts-and-maps/yukagir>

#### Overview:

The Yukagir are one of the smallest minorities in the former USSR. Territorially, the Yukagir are subdivided into two groups: the Taiga group lives in the Upper Kolyma District of the Yakut Republic and in the Saimanchanskoi District of Magadan Province along the tributaries of the Kolyma River. The Tundra Yukagir reside in the Lower Kolyma District of the Yakut Republic between the Kolyma and the Indigirka rivers. Both groups live among numerically predominant neighbors: Yakuts, Chukchee, Even, and Russians.

#### Current & Relevant Information:

**Location.** The region in which the Yukagir are settled is one of mountains, low ridges, and plateaus divided by valleys and covered by swamps and lakes. The mountains are covered by hardy northern trees: pine, larch, birch, and alder (good shelter for black bears, musk deer, squirrels, and mountain sheep). Aside from some dwarf birches and arctic willows, however, the northern plains and flatlands of Yukagir country support only sedge grasses, mosses, lichens, and berry-bearing bushes. Both territorial groups inhabit arctic or subarctic zones, the main feature of which is the permafrost. A cold winter with blizzards and winds gusting up to gale strength lasts about eight months. In January the mean temperature ranges from -40° F to —70°, and —90° has been recorded. Polar night (with mid-night sun) reigns in the Kolyma lowlands and the northern part of the Chukhotsk Peninsula. During the late spring and early summer, on the other hand, many plants bloom, enormous flocks of ducks and geese appear, the salmon run, and the lowlands become one great marsh. Summers are short and cool.

**Demography.** During the nineteenth century the population dropped drastically, from 2,350 in 1859 to 1,500 in 1897, eventually falling to below 500. Since then, according to Soviet statistics, it has changed as follows: 1926-1927: 443; 1959: 442; 1970: 613; 1979: 835; 1989: 1,112. This growth is mostly due to the high incidence

of ethnically mixed marriages, the offspring of which commonly categorize themselves as Yukagir.

#### Social Issues:

**“Policy Options for Arctic Environmental Governance: Prepared by the Indigenous Peoples Working Group,” Patricia Cochran and Mark Nuttall, Arctic Transform, 5 March 2009 [147] <https://www.slideshare.net/DrLendySpires/policy-options-for-arctic-environment-governance-indigenous-people>**

#### Overview:

The Arctic marine environment and the harvesting of renewable resources by indigenous peoples are being affected by global climate change. Climate change research and scenarios for the future suggest that climate change will have significant impacts on marine and terrestrial animal populations, affecting population size, structure, reproduction rates and migration routes. Arctic residents, particularly indigenous peoples, will feel these climate change impacts first and most intensely. Indigenous peoples live with fluctuations in weather and climatic conditions. Experiencing, understanding and relating to year-to-year changes in weather, ice and snow patterns, animal behavior and movement, and in hunting and fishing conditions is part of life in the Arctic. Yet the trends currently being observed give concern over major, irreversible impacts on indigenous communities and livelihoods. Indigenous peoples of the Arctic must be given information regarding the possible effects of global warming and the changes projected for the Arctic environment and what it may mean for cultural, social, political, economic, and spiritual activities of the indigenous peoples of the Arctic.

The indigenous peoples of the Arctic include the Inupiat, Yup'it, Aleut and Athabaskan peoples of Alaska; the Inuit, Inuvialuit, Athabaskans and Dene of northern Canada; the Kalaallit and Inughuit of Greenland; the Saami of Fennoscandia and Russia's Kola peninsula; and the Chukchi, Yup'it, Even, Evenk, Nenets, Nivkhi and Yukaghir and many other peoples of the Russian Far North and Siberia. Arctic peoples have depended for millennia on the living resources of land and sea, as hunters, fishers and reindeer herders. Today, many indigenous communities across the Arctic continue to depend largely on harvesting and using living terrestrial, marine and freshwater resources, combining informal and formal economies. Harvested resources are used as food, provide material for traditional clothing and other products, and also figure prominently in the cash-economy of local households and communities.

Indigenous peoples maintain a strong connection to the Arctic environment which provides them with the economic and nutritional bases for survival, but is also very important for social identity, cultural survival and spiritual life. Climate change impacts the traditional harvesting activities of indigenous peoples. Rapid weather changes and occurrence of thin ice and severe weather conditions (e.g., strong

winds and storms) makes hunting more dangerous. Furthermore, disappearing sea ice affects many species that are subject to harvest, for instance polar bears, seals, whales and some fish stocks depend on ice cover. As a result, the livelihoods connected with hunting, fishing and herding are under threat. Additionally, housing, infrastructure and transport connections of coastal indigenous communities are seriously affected by climate changes, with rising maintenance costs and sometimes even the necessity of relocation.

Present permanent settlements have elaborate infrastructure and costs of resettlement are high. Moreover, relocation results in social problems and deepening of cultural loss. In such cases, traditional knowledge, anchored in geographical areas, cannot be applied any longer and therefore may be lost. Indigenous peoples could be supported to face the changes in several ways. Further empowerment, revised legislations and regulations and financial support by the respective states as well as modern technology and sufficient information on issues such as health risks may play important roles in assisting indigenous peoples adapt to the changing environment. Additionally, as the physical environment of the Arctic continues to change due to global warming the indigenous peoples of the Arctic will need to strengthen their languages, music, art, and literature to help maintain a healthy identity. Indigenous peoples are increasingly diversifying their economies by engaging in industrial activities, for example through involvement in industrial fishing and oil and gas development. In some cases, this involvement has benefitted communities and regions to a large extent, in other cases the results have not met the economic, social and cultural expectations. The major part of indigenous communities have strategies that emphasize the involvement in a number of different social, cultural and economic spheres which affect family organization, employment training and school curriculum to mention but three examples. Today this industrial involvement is one of the drivers in Arctic communities and is an integral part of any climate change adaptation strategy.

#### Current & Relevant Information:

Although significant progress has been made in developing integrated approaches to policy in the Arctic marine environment, and while land claims and forms of self-government have granted some indigenous peoples specific degrees of autonomy, and circumpolar fora such as the Arctic Council have recognized the importance of involving the peoples of the Arctic, the voices, concerns and perspectives of indigenous peoples are still often muted and ignored. Indigenous peoples also remain, in many cases, excluded from actual policy discussion and decision-making. International opposition over hunting marine mammals, for example, persists, and the issues surrounding traditional and contemporary practices of hunting seals, whales, walrus, harbor porpoise, polar bears and other marine mammals are almost impossible to get on the agenda of the Arctic Council and its various working groups. This raises the question of the effectiveness of the Arctic Council if it is not prepared

to discuss issues of controversy, such as animal-rights activities, the impact of the US Marine Mammal Protection Act, or the recent decision by the US to list the polar bear as endangered throughout its range.

Discussion of climate change adaptation policy in the marine environment is based on the reliability of science, yet there are shortcomings in scientific models and scenarios. For example, modelling for the complexity of social and economic life is a significant limitation for climate change science and subsequent policy options. Additionally, research findings are often not communicated to indigenous communities in an effective locally-relevant and accessible manner, resulting in a knowledge gap concerning changing Arctic conditions among indigenous peoples. Likewise, the lack of communication also means that scientists are not aware if the needs and concerns of indigenous communities have been addressed.

Climate change is seldom analyzed and understood in the context of other changes and stressors that have more immediate impacts on indigenous communities and livelihoods. Because of the interdependence between Arctic economies and global markets, indigenous peoples are multiply exposed -- to climate change, to changes caused by the global processes affecting markets, technologies and public policies, as well as to local and regional political and economic situations. These changes are also resulting in shifting gender roles and changing family dynamics, which will also require consideration when formulating policy options. Lack of sophisticated and nuanced analysis also limits policy options.

How do different states define marine resources and the marine environment? How do these definitions converge with or diverge from indigenous understandings and perspective?

The melting ice makes the Arctic accessible for expanding fisheries, oil and gas development, mineral exploration, shipping (the North West Passage / Northern Sea Route), tourism and military presence. This increased accessibility has already made sovereignty, territorial claims, military control, pollution prevention and control measures as well as rescue operations appear on international and national agendas. The application for observer status in the Arctic Council by China is but one example of the increased international interest in a more accessible Arctic. These activities have to be related to indigenous peoples for example with respect to security and health matters as well as land right and their possibilities to participate in the relevant political scenes and benefit from economic endeavors.

Commercial fishing is increasing in several regions of the Arctic marine environment, yet little has been done internationally to prepare for this. At the same time, indigenous communities in Alaska and Greenland have long been involved in commercial fisheries, and communities in Canada's Nunavut are beginning to develop new fisheries. What kinds of implications will there be for indigenous

communities wishing to harvest Arctic fisheries given the globalized and intensely competitive nature of the fishing industry?

**“The Yukaghirs: A nomadic Siberian tribe on the brink of extinction,” Shura Burtin, Russia Beyond, 17 January 2014 [148]**

[https://www.rbth.com/society/2014/01/17/the\\_yukaghirs\\_a\\_nomadic\\_siberian\\_tribe\\_on\\_the\\_brink\\_of\\_extinction\\_33149.html](https://www.rbth.com/society/2014/01/17/the_yukaghirs_a_nomadic_siberian_tribe_on_the_brink_of_extinction_33149.html)

Overview:

A reporter's stories from traveling with a small Siberian tribe, who have been living in East Siberia since the Neolithic Age.

It is late April, the ice road is already closed, but the taxi is still running, skirting around ice holes. People are using the last opportunity to reach their remote settlements. Soon there will be no road here whatsoever, and this is how it will stay until the middle of June, when the ice has melted and motorboats have sprung into action.

It is hard to get one's head around local distances: 500 kilometers to the district capital, 3,500 kilometers to Yakutsk. A territory the size of Europe but absolutely uninhabited. Tundra, taiga, cold rivers and lakes, and mountain ranges that used to be populated only by wild animals and rare nomadic families of hunters and fishermen. Now they, too, have become almost extinct.

I am driving together with the chieftain of Yukaghir, Vyacheslav Shadrin, a big, shy man in glasses. He is something of a social worker, roaming around the villages, helping people with papers, sending a child to hospital or getting the ministry to allocate a snowmobile for the community.

“I remember my grandfather pronouncing my destiny once. ‘He will never grow into a hunter,’ he told me. And so, I was sent to the city to study. But I always knew that I would have to come back,” he says.

The Yukaghirs are an indigenous, pre-Tungusic people of east Siberia, who have lived in this area since the Neolithic Age. They traveled in families, in yurts and half-dugouts, hunting and fishing on the riverbanks. They used stone tools until the Russians arrived into the area.

Their culture was based on ancient beliefs: ancestor worship and shamanism. Here, in the cold taiga expanses of east Siberia, there survived until very recently a Stone Age culture. When a Yukaghir shaman died, his body was cut into pieces, the meat dried and distributed like good-luck charms, and his head was erected into a wooden body, dressed in fine clothes and put inside a house like an icon.

Current & Relevant Information:



Kolymskoye and Andryushkino are neighboring settlements, 240 kilometers apart. Each has about 800 residents made up of Chukchis, Evenks, and Yukaghirs.

From the outside, settlements beyond the Polar Circle look rather ugly. Local reindeer herders and hunters never used to live in settlements, such as the miserable two-storied barracks on the banks of the Kolyma River. Reindeer hides hang everywhere drying, lying around, slowly emerging from under melting snow; they are clearly not considered here to be anything of any value.

The most surprising thing here is the prices, which are four times as high as in Moscow. A packet of milk and a dozen eggs are \$7 each. Everything here is brought by air, while a ticket from Yakutsk to Chersky costs \$1,000 one way. People here do not have any money, only a lot of meat and fish.

**“‘I’m the Son of the Oliero’: Yukaghir Identity and Land Issues,” Jaroslaw Derlicki, *AlterNative: An International Journal of Indigenous Peoples*, December 2010 [149] [https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Jaroslaw-Derlicki/publication/210282014\\_I\\_am\\_the\\_son\\_of\\_Oliero\\_Yukaghir\\_identity\\_and\\_land\\_issues/links/5c63fa9fa6fdccb608beb42d/I-am-the-son-of-Oliero-Yukaghir-identity-and-land-issues.pdf?origin=publication\\_detail](https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Jaroslaw-Derlicki/publication/210282014_I_am_the_son_of_Oliero_Yukaghir_identity_and_land_issues/links/5c63fa9fa6fdccb608beb42d/I-am-the-son-of-Oliero-Yukaghir-identity-and-land-issues.pdf?origin=publication_detail)**

Abstract:

Almost every definition of “ethnic group” refers to homeland, locality or symbolic dimensions of the land. This article reflects the situation of the Yukaghir, a people of approximately 1,000 individuals in north-east Siberia. While land is particularly crucial for Yukaghir identity, the current situation of rights to land is highly dissatisfying for the Yukaghir. Traditional economic activities which are essential for their identity (hunting, fishing and/or reindeer breeding) are possible only on particular land. Taiga and tundra delimit the possibilities of what people might do for a living, their professions and careers. It also binds them to the world of their ancestors. I argue that in the Yukaghir case, culture and identity may survive only by virtue of living from the taiga and tundra.

Current & Relevant Information:

**Introduction**

Land has an essential meaning for every ethnic group in the world, whether it’s a very small community or a significant nation. It’s mentioned in almost every definition of an ethnic group. Anthony D. Smith (1992, p. 438) defines ethnic as “a named human group claiming a homeland and sharing myths of common ancestry, historical memories and a distinct culture”, so there is a direct reference to the homeland. James Clifford (2000) writes that 20th-century identities do not assume continuity of culture or tradition. They live owing to pollination and transplantation, and what differs between them becomes a part of the local past (pp. 11–23). It means that the past or history of the group is territorialized. Other authors point out

the existence of symbolic or imagined communities, whose separateness comes down to self-identification and subjective differentiation on the basis of sometimes just a few symbolic features or values. Such communities are limited by the area they inhabit or wish to claim (Anderson, 1997, pp. 19–22). In this article I don't want to discuss which is not. But I do believe that land plays a leading role in all of the above definitions. We may look at the identity of the Yukaghir, a people in north-east Siberia, through various lenses, trying to define it through distinct culture, local past or symbolic values; but the land is something that is manifestly there. It's always been there, it's multi-dimensional, and it is the most stable element of the Yukaghir ethnoscape. In this article, I want to discuss some dimensions and aspects of the land and its influences on Yukaghir identity.

In the past, Yakutia was inhabited by many proto-Yukaghir tribes, of which only two remain: the Upper Kolyma Yukaghirs inhabit primarily the village of Nelemnoe and the regional Zyrianka, and are referred to as the forest (or river) Yukaghirs; the Lower Kolyma Yukaghirs are concentrated in the village of Andrushkino in the Lower Kolyma region, in Kolymskoe, and the Cherski region, and are referred to as the tundra Yukaghirs. The drastic reduction of the Yukaghir population can be explained by migration of Eveny, Evenks and Yakuts, and also by Russian conquest. Due to wars, new economies and diseases brought by newcomers, as well as Soviet national policy, the Yukaghir population dropped from 5,000 in the 17th century to 285 people in 1959 (Derlicki, 2003, pp. 121–122). It should be noted that numerous Yukaghirs were recorded as Evens or Chukchees.

It seems that under the Tsarist regime, Yukaghir life underwent only few changes, as local administration didn't interfere in their internal matters. Even though they were forced to pay a special tax called *yasak* (usually paid in furs or other resources), they acquired certain technical innovations, and became acquainted with alcohol, their life remained basically unchanged. They wandered across taiga and tundra looking for quarry, fish, berries and, in the case of Lower Kolyma Yukaghirs, also bred reindeer. However, this traditional way of living changed after the October Revolution, in 1917. After the liberal policies of the so-called Committee of the North, the Soviet government, by contrast, forced Russification, collectivization and centralization. Soviet national policy towards indigenous populations interrupted the existing system of clan relationships and allegiances. Yesterday's nomads were forced to settle in villages, their elites (chiefs, shamans, elders) were liquidated. Former kinsmen were divided into *sovkhoz* (Soviet farm) brigades, and their children had to attend boarding schools (Derlicki, 2003, pp. 121–122; 2004; Forsyth, 1992).

Although Yukaghirs have gone through great change, their traditional economy has remained basically unchanged. Even today the Lower Kolyma Yukaghirs depend on hunting and fishing for their livelihood, and many families keep 10 to 20 reindeer for meat and transport. The forest Yukaghirs also fish and hunt for moose and fur-bearing animals. These activities and close contact with nature and all that goes with

it—beliefs, customs, the laws of the taiga and tundra—are the only elements which connect contemporary Yukaghirs with the world of their ancestors. Even though they have lost much of their culture and language, they have preserved traditional ways of living (Derlicki, 2003, p. 122).

In 2002 the Yukaghirs in the Republic of Sakha numbered over 1,000.<sup>1</sup> With a steady increase in the birth-rate the situation seems fairly comfortable, but it must be remembered that already about 80% of the population is of mixed descent, and research carried out in 1985–90 showed that only 7.7% of Yukaghirs were direct descendants of the old clans (some Yukaghirs look like Russians). Geneticists' forecast was that "within two generations the Yukaghir genotype will be lost" (Problemy . . . , 1996, p. 31). According to official data, the situation with Yukaghir language seems quite good, since 35% of the people know and use their native tongue. But my research shows that at present the language is known only by about 60–80 persons (Derlicki, 2003, p. 123). It means that one of the objective elements of ethnic identity—the Yukaghir language—has almost vanished. It's important to underline that at present nobody uses Yukaghir in everyday life.

## **Conclusion**

In this article I suggest that the land is the most sustainable element of ethnic identity, as almost every (or maybe every) definition of "ethnic group" refers to homeland, locality or symbolic dimensions of the land. I've tried to sketch Yukaghir history and their present situation very briefly, to provide a wider context for discussion on Yukaghir identity and land issues. I think it was very important to present, step-by-step, the changes in official land relationships from the beginning of the 20th century until the end of the Soviet Union. Organizing cooperative enterprises, kolkhozes and then sovkhoses has greatly changed the official status of land. But in fact, people kept the territories that belonged to their ancestors. The same situation has occurred with the formation of obshchinas. However, Yukaghirs from Nelemnoe had no rights to the land that traditionally belonged to them, as it was defined a "special land fund of the region". Even today they are deprived of the best and richest parts of their territories. On the other hand, Yukaghirs from Andrushkino were officially granted rights to their lands, but their traditional territories lie deep in tundra near the home village of Tustakh-Sen, which is far from the village they inhabit presently. I didn't focus on present economic problems, structures, and the existence of Yukaghir obshchinas, as they are similar throughout Siberia (see Gray, 2001; Ziker 2002).

Finally, I've tried to show the importance of ethnic territory and its influences on ethnic identity. Unfortunately, Yukaghir groups don't have a common land, and that's why they may only refer to their local homelands in various ways, for example, as a base for names for ethnic groups (Lower and Upper Kolyma Yukaghirs), for individual persons (Uluro Ado), or for enterprises (Oduly Chukochi). Land names are used in ethnic conflicts such as that between the Yukaghirs and Eveny from

Andrushkino. Territorial issues are reflected even in the religious life of the Yukaghirs, as every place has its individual “owner”, for example. In my opinion there are three land issues which may become, or are already, essential to Yukaghir identity. The first is the project of territorial autonomy (Suktul), which is very important in the development of the Yukaghir community as it guarantees and grants rights to the land. The second is the shared memory of the home village of Tustakh-Sen, which has become an idea of sacred Yukaghir land—the only place where true ethnic revival is possible. I have also tried to sketch how Yukaghirs understand and perceive the surrounding landscape. The third land issue of great importance to Yukaghir identity is the traditional way of living, possible only in particular landscapes (taiga and tundra).

All of the above land dimensions have, in my opinion, crucial meanings in preserving and developing Yukaghir culture and identity, as many objective traits such as language and ethnic purity don't exist anymore among Yukaghirs.

**“Formation of the Yukaghir National School,” Tatyana V. Tretyakova, et al.,**  
**Propósitos y Representaciones, September 2020 [150]**  
<https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/EJ1280184.pdf>

#### Summary:

The problems of preserving the language and culture of small ethnic groups are relevant in world society. The Yukaghirs are one of the disappearing ethnic groups due to their small number and long-term adaptation in a multi-ethnic environment that does not contribute to the development and preservation of linguistic and cultural traditions. The lack of a language environment, scientifically grounded educational programs and teaching materials, violation of psychological foundations that contribute to the preservation of an ethnic group are the main bases of the relevance of the study. The article presents the results of a long-term educational experiment on the preservation of the Yukaghir language and culture in the Nelemnoye secondary school of the Verkhnekolymsky district of the Republic of Sakha (Yakutia), the successful management of the educational process in the new conditions, its progressive expansion, development, and creation of a socio-educational space to preserve the native language and culture in the Yukaghir village. The practical results of the experiment can be used to solve similar problems in the world's educational society.

#### Current & Relevant Information:

#### **Introduction**

The system of education and training of the peoples of the North that took shape in the Soviet Union contributed to the disruption of the continuity of generations, the separation of children from the traditional occupations of their parents, the loss of the language and culture of their native people. As the famous scientist N.B. Vakhtin

said, “many children left their camp or village, their family and linguistic environment forever, to never return, either literally or linguistically” (Vakhtin, 2004). By the end of the 70s, there was a need to change the situation: the majority of Yukaghir children refused to continue their education, remaining with the received primary education, respectively, only a few received secondary vocational and higher education, thereby creating an acute shortage of personnel in all specialties. In this regard, in 1979, a school in Nelemnoye village was converted to a basic eight-year, and in 1988 - to a complete secondary.

The Nelemnoye village, Verkhnekolymskiy district of the Republic of Sakha (Yakutia), is a place of compact residence of forest Yukaghirs (183 people), where you can still hear the language and find traces of the ethnic culture of the Oduls. Five of the forest Yukaghirs are native speakers (there are no native speakers left in Nelemnoye), 17 people speak the spoken language (including 6 people in Nelemnoye), the basics of the Yukaghir language have been studied since 1993 by about 100 graduates of the Tekki Odulok Nelemnoye secondary school (Shadrin, 2014). Thus, to one degree or another, a little more than 120 people speak the Yukaghir language. These facts prompted the International Conference “Languages, Culture and the Future of the Peoples of the Arctic” (Yakutsk, June 1993) to adopt a resolution with a petition to the UN to give the Yukaghirs the status of “disappearing ethnos of the world”, and their language - “a disappearing unique language of the world” preserved in Republic of Sakha (Yakutia) (Kurilov, 1996).

However, this did not solve the problem of ethnic identity. Most of the Yukaghirs grew up as Russified marginals, who had lost their native language, culture, connection with nature, who did not adapt to the new conditions of life, which were in constant conflict between the realities of life and the traditional worldview. In the late 1980s, the social situation developed in such a way that most of the children refused to recognize themselves as Yukaghirs: some were ashamed because there was an opinion that the Yukaghirs were second-rate, to whom the labels of “alcoholics” and “parasites” were firmly attached, others because of ignorance of the language, and still others simply did not know about their belonging to the people (Shadrin, 2014).

## **Conclusion**

Thus, the Nelemnoye secondary school is a vivid example of active planned work to preserve the Yukaghir language and culture. The experimental work of the school took place in difficult conditions of the absence of a linguistic environment when children did not know their native language and could only learn it at the school. Currently, educational and methodological literature has been created on teaching the native language, teaching native literature, national culture, active assistance to the work of the school from the family, and rural society has been organized.

The main content of experimental activities in the Nelemnoye secondary school named after Tekki Odulok made up the development of an educational program and

practical testing of curricula, the introduction of various forms of educational and extracurricular work (events focused on the transfer of knowledge about the language, traditional culture, circles and electives of language and ethnocultural orientation, etc.). This became the basis for expanding the social orientation of the experiment and served as the basis for its durability and effectiveness. Experimental work at the school resulted in museums, folklore ensembles, social involvement, development, and publication of teaching aids.

Successful management of the work of the school under the conditions of the experiment led to the intensification of the educational activities of students, the rise of interest in their native culture, research work, the implementation of mental and creative principles through the development of new forms of organization of extracurricular work, the integration of the activities of the school and rural society.

Scientific support of experimental processes was provided through cooperation with the Institute of Problems of Indigenous Peoples of the North of the Siberian Branch of the Russian Academy of Sciences, Institute of National Schools of the Republic of Sakha (Yakutia), Ammosov North-Eastern Federal University, the Museum of Music and Folklore of the Peoples of Yakutia. Cooperation is underway with public organizations - the Yukaghir Association and the Council of Elders of the Yukaghir people.

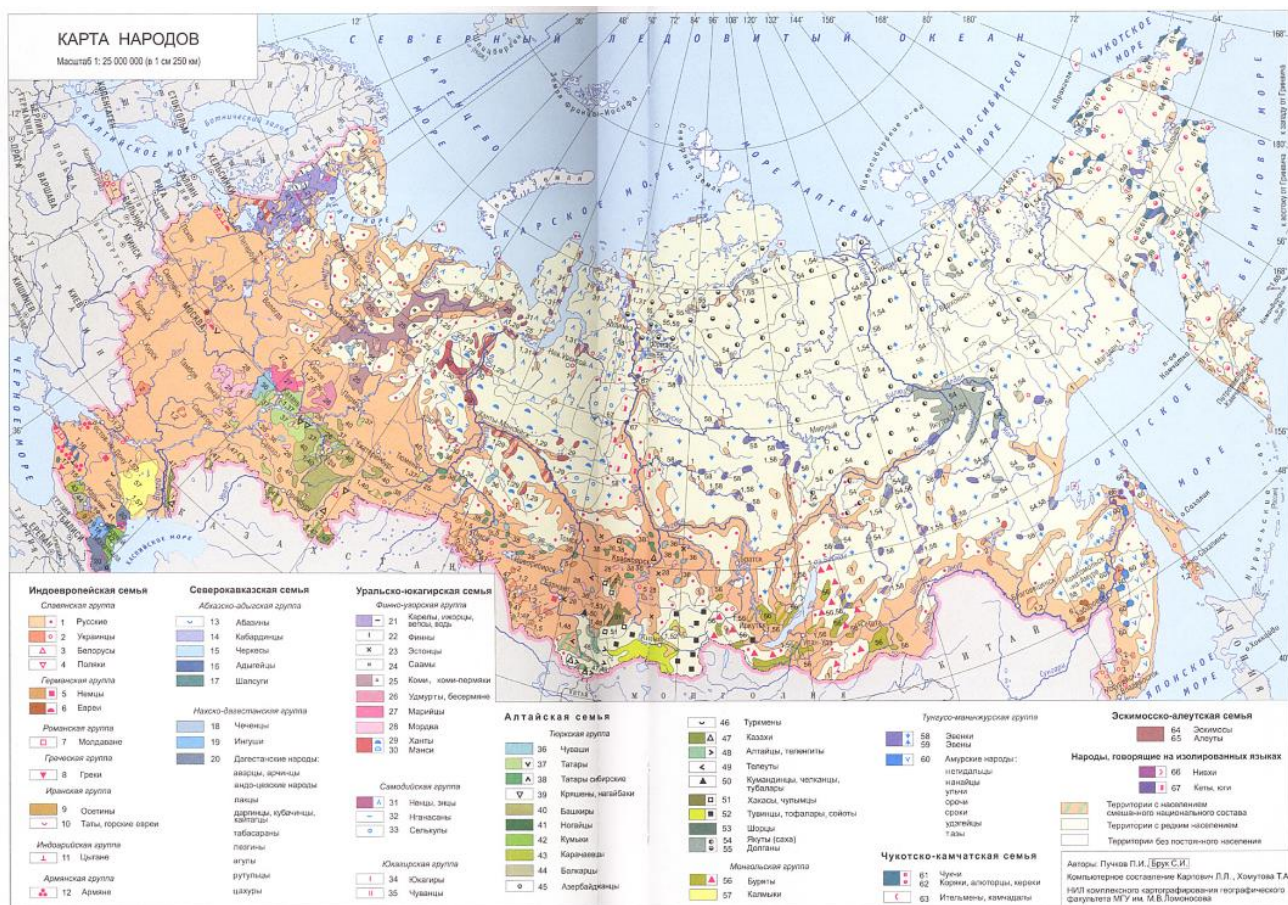
Now the whole world is building a School of cooperation, co-creation, co-development, the main goal of which should be a Personality who is confident in the future, who owns not only digital technologies that master us at cosmic speed, but who has humanitarian competencies, who knows how to live and develop in a team, in society ready for self-development. And the remote small Nelemnoye school, which set as its goal the preservation of its people, realizes these competencies in its students easily and progressively. The most important thing that the school has achieved is that the student has become an active participant in a large social human experiment, a co-author of all curricula and manuals, a conductor, propagandizing the knowledge gained and introducing the family to the process of preserving language and culture, to the revival of the people.

**“The Impact of Climate Change on Indigenous Peoples Has Received Little Attention in Russia,” Maria Stambler, Climate Scorecard, 31 August 2020 [151]**  
<https://www.climatescorecard.org/2020/08/the-impact-of-climate-change-on-indigenous-peoples-has-received-little-attention-in-russia/>

#### Overview:

The most vulnerable part of the Russian population that can expect the greatest risk of lifestyle changes under the influence of climate change are the indigenous peoples. The Russian indigenous peoples' movement represents 40 indigenous peoples. As this map indicates the majority of Russia's indigenous peoples' population is located in the Arctic and Siberian regions.





## Current & Relevant Information:

In Russia, issues of climate (climate change, justice, sustainable development, green economy), as a concept, as politics, and as a set of prescribed practices, receive little attention in the country, Dr. Rodion Sulyandziga, Director of the Center for support of indigenous peoples of the North (CSIPN), told Climate Scorecard.

“..... The concept of ‘indigenous peoples’ is not included in the Russian legislation. Instead, the 1993 Constitution of the Russian Federation introduces the legal category of ‘small-numbered indigenous peoples’: ‘indigenous peoples are peoples residing at the territories of traditional settlement of their ancestors, preserving traditional lifestyle and occupations, consisting of less than 50 thousand people in the Russian Federation and perceiving themselves as self-sustaining ethnic communities’. Article 69 of the Russian Constitution also guarantees the rights of the indigenous peoples according to the norms of international law and international treaties of the Russian Federation,” Sulyandziga explains.

Additionally, Sulyandziga says, despite growing concerns, in the last couple of years, the government weakened the protection regime. Many citizen-led environmental movements pressing for even modest environmental controls to protect local environments, which gained momentum in the early post-Soviet period,



were undermined in the late 1990s and early 2000s due to the continued lack of legal infrastructure that supports civilian suits and enforces existing environmental regulations. In some cases, citizen environmental movements were clearly co-opted by an elite interest group. On top of all this, many Indigenous and environmental NGOs have been declared foreign agents by the Russian state, creating legal difficulties for these groups.

Like other countries with many different indigenous peoples, Russia's indigenous groups' way of life and traditional types of economic activity (fishing, reindeer husbandry, agriculture, etc.) are directly dependent on climatic conditions. Because of more frequent weather thaws, ice layers often form on the ground, which limits reindeer access to lichens under the ice crust. Permafrost thawing, changes in snow cover distribution and earlier melting and later river ice formation observed in recent years lead to disruption of the traditional ways of reindeer migration between winter and summer pastures. Climate warming and a decrease in the ice cover of the northern seas, changes in the migration routes of wild deer and their food supply, and a decrease in the number of marine animals can result in a reduction in the traditional fisheries of the indigenous peoples of the Arctic (the Sami, the Nenets and many other reindeer herding communities). In fact, the Arctic is one of the most vulnerable regions of the world to climate change; the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) puts it on a par, for example, with small island states in a number of countries. Of course, it is much less densely populated than territories in lower latitudes. Nevertheless, 2.5 million people live in the Arctic zone – 1.8% of the country's population; it is home to 41 indigenous groups.

**“Rights of indigenous peoples of the Russian Arctic,” D.A. Mokhorov, T.A. Baranova, and A.A. Donenko, IOP Conf. Series: Earth and Environmental Science, 2019 [152] <https://iopscience.iop.org/article/10.1088/1755-1315/302/1/012155/pdf>**

Abstract:

The paper focuses on the relevant issue of legislative regulation of the rights of indigenous peoples of the Russian Arctic. The lands of the Arctic region have long been considered uninhabitable, and yet not for one century have they been explored and reclaimed by men. According to historical records, the Russian navigators sailed through the Arctic Ocean as early as the 11th century, and in the first half of the 16th century, a map of the Arctic Ocean seafloor was based on the drawings of Dmitry Gerasimov. By 16-17th centuries, the economic capacity of the Arctic territories was recognized both in Russia and in Western Europe. Some Arctic territories were featured in the treaties between the Muscovite state and the countries of Western Europe, which can be illustrated by the Treaty of Teusina signed with Sweden in 1595. However, the Government of the Russian Empire had long considered the development of the North as necessary, but not a top priority objective. In late 19th and early 20th century, the wealth of the Russian North was on the agenda again in the context of the economic boom and military growth of the leading European

powers. In the USSR, the reclamation of the Arctic was limited to the development of natural resources, while the prospects of economic and industrial growth of the North as well as the associated legal regulations were also in prospect. Currently, the Arctic is a primary interest zone for Russia, the main acute issues remaining the reclamation and use of natural resources and legislative regulations of the indigenous peoples' rights.

#### Current & Relevant Information:

### **Introduction**

The Arctic zone of the Russian Federation is regarded as a subject of utmost strategic importance for ensuring the country's interests.

A special focus of the government should be on indigenous small-numbered peoples of the North, who not only require state protection, but also need to become fully incorporated in the Russian Arctic sustainable development.

Since the Russians were the first European settlers to come to the Arctic, about half of the Arctic population now live in the Russian territories. The indigenous population of the High North is formed by descendants of Russian immigrants — the Pomors (the White Sea coasts), Ust-Tsilemts (Ust-Tsilemsky District, the Komi Republic), Markovtsy (named after Markovo village, the Chukotka Autonomous Region), Kolymchans (the Kolyma River, the Republic of Sakha) and Gizhigans (the Gizhiga river, the Magadan Region).

The Pomors are considered to be an ethnic group of the Russian long-standing inhabitants. The most numerous indigenous people of the Russian Arctic are the Yakuts (the Republic of Sakha), who amount to about 500 thousand people. Other peoples living in the coastal areas of the Arctic are considered to be small-numbered peoples. Among them are: the Nenets (the Yamalo-Nenets Autonomous Region and Nenets Autonomous Okrug) amounting to about 45 thousand people, Evens (the Magadan Oblast and Kamchatka Krai) amounting to more than 21 thousand people, Dolgans (the Krasnoyarsk Krai) numbering more than 7 thousand people, Evenks (the Eastern Siberia), Karelians (the Republic of Karelia), Chukchi (the Chukchi Peninsula, the shores of the Chukchi Sea and the Bering Sea), Koryaks (the Kamchatka Krai), Kola Sami (the Russian Kola Peninsula), Kets (the Krasnoyarsk Krai), Khanty (the Khanty-Mansi Autonomous Region), Nga-Nasans (the Taymyr Peninsula), Yukaghir (the Kolyma River), Selkup (the Tomsk Region, Krasnoyarsk Krai, Yamalo-Nenets Autonomous Region, Nenets Autonomous Region), Vepsians (the Republic of Karelia, Leningrad Region, Vologda Region).

Each indigenous people have its own ancient culture, language, traditional handicrafts and epics. However, despite cultural differences, all indigenous people of the Arctic share a unique lifestyle and ways of exploiting natural resources inherited from their ancestors and adapted to the harsh survival conditions of the High North.

A part of indigenous peoples leads a nomadic or semi-nomadic way of living, which is defined by traditional ways of using natural resources, such as reindeer breeding, gathering, fishing, sea hunting and game hunting. The majority of the Russian Arctic's inhabitants are settled population living in villages, settlements, towns and cities. According to analysts, about 20 thousand people, who account for about a quarter of the aboriginal population, move throughout the Arctic all year round or for a part of the year. Most of the nomadic population of the country (60%) originates from the Yamalo-Nenets Autonomous Region.

About 1 million people currently live and work in the Arctic zone, more than 150 thousand of them originating from 17 indigenous small-numbered peoples.

Although throughout the past decade, the Arctic zone of the Russian Federation has been a focus of key strategies and big projects, the current legislation regarding the indigenous peoples of the North can be defined as undergoing legal stagnation and transformation.

## **Conclusions**

It is crucial to emphasize the fact, that the Russian legislation distinguishes the concepts "indigenous peoples" and "indigenous small-numbered peoples".

Indigenous peoples of the Arctic fall into three categories: a) small-numbered peoples; b) some numerous peoples of the North (the Yakuty or Yakut, the Komi); c) sub-ethnic groups of Russian long-standing inhabitants. However, specific state protection and care extend only to indigenous small-numbered peoples: the Nenets, Selkup, Nga-Nasans, Chukchi, Evens, Evenks, Dolgans, Itelmens, Chuvans and others. This contradiction incurs a number of legal collisions, which have a direct impact on the development and interaction of these groups of Arctic peoples.

Therefore, the legal regulation in the Arctic zone should cease being occasional and should become systematic instead, with a tendency to pass statutory acts in a short-term, mid-term and long-term perspective with a due regard for political, social, economic, cultural and ethical bases of the indigenous peoples' status. Moreover, it is necessary to enforce the federal standard of rights to certain legal relations through the regional regulation with an account for the associated ethnic communities' status quo.

To sum up, in order to meet modern demands, an inevitable condition of securing rights of indigenous peoples of the North is codification of the relevant law, which would result in a new statutory act, such as, for instance, the Code on Indigenous Small-numbered Peoples of the North of the Russian Federation.

## **2. Non-Indigenous People Living in the Arctic:**

### **A. Canada:**

**“Arctic and Northern Policy Framework,” Government of Canada, 22 September 2022 [153] <https://www.rcaanc-cirnac.gc.ca/eng/1560523306861/1560523330587>**

#### **Overview:**

The Arctic and Northern Policy Framework is a profound change of direction for the Government of Canada. For too long, Canada's Arctic and northern residents, especially Indigenous people, have not had access to the same services, opportunities, and standards of living as those enjoyed by other Canadians. There are longstanding inequalities in transportation, energy, communications, employment, community infrastructure, health and education. While almost all past governments have put forward northern strategies, none closed these gaps for the people of the North, or created a lasting legacy of sustainable economic development.

In her 2016 Interim Report on the Shared Arctic Leadership Model, Minister's Special Representative Mary Simon said, "the simple fact is that Arctic strategies throughout my lifetime have rarely matched or addressed the magnitude of the basic gaps between what exists in the Arctic and what other Canadians take for granted."

Co-developing the new framework became a bold opportunity to shape and direct change in the region by collaborating with governments, northerners and Indigenous governments and organizations. Consultation was not enough to meet the challenges and harness emerging opportunities in the Arctic and North. In a significant shift, the federal government, Indigenous peoples, Inuit, First Nations and Métis, 6 territorial and provincial governments (Yukon, Northwest Territories, Nunavut, Newfoundland and Labrador, Quebec, and Manitoba) contributed to this framework together.

#### **Current & Relevant Information:**

##### **A shared vision**

Today, there is a shared vision of the future where northern and Arctic people are thriving, strong and safe. The Arctic and Northern Policy Framework gives us a roadmap to achieve this vision. There are clear priorities and actions set out by the federal government and its partners to:

- nurture healthy families and communities
- invest in the energy, transportation and communications infrastructure that northern and Arctic governments, economies and communities need
- create jobs, foster innovation and grow Arctic and northern economies

- support science, knowledge and research that is meaningful for communities and for decision-making
- face the effects of climate change and support healthy ecosystems in the Arctic and North
- ensure that Canada and our northern and Arctic residents are safe, secure and well-defended
- restore Canada's place as an international Arctic leader
- advance reconciliation and improve relationships between Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples

For the federal government, the framework's goals will guide investments and activities, through 2030. Implementing the Arctic and Northern Policy Framework will require collaborative approaches. Our government recognizes that 'made in Ottawa' policies have not been successful. The new approach puts the future into the hands of the people who live there to realize the promise of the Arctic and the North.

Through the co-development of the framework, and by working in partnership to realize its vision and implement its goals and objectives, this initiative will advance reconciliation and renew Canada's relationship with Inuit, First Nations, Métis and support the non-Indigenous residents of Canada's Arctic and North.

A crucial element of this innovative, cooperative form of policy making is the inclusion of chapters from our Indigenous, territorial and provincial partners. Through these chapters, our partners speak directly to Canadians and to the world, expressing their own visions, aspirations and priorities. These critical components of the Arctic and Northern Policy Framework map out areas of present and future collaboration between partners and the Government of Canada, and will provide guidance on the implementation of the framework.

In reflecting their priorities and aspirations, these chapters recognize and advance the vision and interests of Inuit, First Nations and Métis peoples. Partners have chosen their own approaches to crafting these chapters. For example, Yukon First Nations and the Government of Yukon have collaborated closely during the development of the Arctic and Northern Policy Framework, and will be producing separate chapters that speak to their mutual as well as distinct interests. First Nations and Métis worked with the Government of the Northwest Territories to draft the Northwest Territories chapter of the framework.

Inuit Nunangat is the Inuit homeland in Canada. Inuit are the majority population in this distinct geographic, cultural, and political region. In order to respect and support Inuit self-determination, an Inuit Nunangat chapter was developed as an Inuit-Crown Partnership Committee deliverable. This chapter will guide how Arctic and Northern Policy Framework goals and objectives are implemented in Inuit Nunangat. This will ensure that the framework respects Inuit rights and that an Inuit Nunangat approach

is utilized in the development and implementation of federal policies and programs that are intended to benefit Inuit, creating efficiencies that in turn benefit all Canadians.

Territorial governments have authored chapters setting out their priorities for new investments and approaches in areas such as economic development, infrastructure and post-secondary education. Yukon, Northwest Territories and Nunavut are also contributing a pan-territorial chapter that articulates their common challenges and opportunities. Drawing on the 2017 Pan-Territorial Vision for Sustainable Development, the territorial governments offer their vision for how the Arctic and Northern Policy Framework can support strong and healthy communities, based on a foundation of responsible resource development, economic diversification, infrastructure and innovation.

The next phase of framework co-development will focus on implementation, investment strategies and governance, moving towards more integrated federal-territorial-provincial and Indigenous approaches to challenges and opportunities in Canada's Arctic and North. Partner chapters will be integral to this next step towards improving the quality of life for our Arctic and Northern residents, especially for Indigenous peoples.

### **Our future**

The Arctic and Northern Policy Framework is ambitious and has just over 10 years to translate its goals and objectives into reality. In that time, the Government of Canada and its partners will close the gaps that exist between this region, particularly in relation to its Indigenous peoples, and the rest of the country.

Canada sees a future in which the people of the Arctic and North are full participants in Canadian society, with access to the same services, opportunities and standards of living as those enjoyed by other Canadians. This ambition will require greater effort, focus, trust and collaboration amongst partners.

Other circumpolar nations are making significant investments to make their Arctic regions part of the global community. Supporting Canadian initiatives to keep pace with international efforts will bring increased opportunities, health and well-being to Indigenous peoples and northerners.

Indigenous and Northern leaders have offered their best innovative, adaptive policy solutions that call for trust, inclusiveness and transparency. We can do no less than to respond with integrity, collaboration and openness. Building on these new partnerships, the Arctic and Northern Policy Framework provides a long-term foundation for transformative change, benefiting our Arctic, its Indigenous peoples, northern residents and all Canadians.

### **Conclusion: Next steps**

The development of this framework has strengthened collaborative relationships between framework partners and among federal government departments. This development of new ways of working together is, in itself, a significant achievement.

In the second phase of the framework, governance mechanisms will be co-developed through discussions among framework partners, the governments and Indigenous peoples' organizations that worked together on the first part of the framework. These mechanisms will describe how partners will regularly collaborate to share information and assess progress on framework implementation, building on significant developments in governance over the last 50 years. Governance mechanisms will:

- support the jurisdictional and institutional landscape created by devolution, modern treaties and land claim and self-government agreements
- adhere to the principles of partnership articulated in *A New Shared Arctic Leadership Model*, the final report of Mary Simon, the Minister's Special Representative on Arctic Leadership
- meet partners' expectations for meaningful, ongoing involvement in policy decisions related to their interests
- provide a forum for all partners to be regularly convened for collaborative discussions on implementation of the framework
- commit to reconciliation in the context of renewed federal-provincial-territorial-Indigenous relationships
- ensure that existing fora, such as the Inuit Crown Partnership Committee, the Yukon Forum, and the Intergovernmental Council of the Northwest Territories, are leveraged to assist in implementation
- reflect the authorities and powers of territorial, provincial and Indigenous governments

Financial investment in the framework will be an integral element of its success. Partners will work together to develop an implementation and investment plan. The plan will outline how new investments together with other economic and regulatory levers will be used to contribute to implementation of the framework.

The implementation and investment plan will:

- define new investments
- provide information on how partners' funding initiatives are aligned with and supportive of the goals and objectives described in the ANPF policy statement, including in partner chapters



- provide strategic alignment and flexibility of investments to accommodate the unique nature of 'doing business' in the Arctic and north
- define indicators, data collection and reporting commitments related to specific funding and initiatives

### **Annex: Principles for the Arctic and Northern Policy Framework**

The principles below were developed to provide continuing guidance on implementation of the framework.

- Decisions about the Arctic and the North will be made in partnership with and with the participation of northerners, to reflect the rights, needs and perspectives of northerners
- The rights and jurisdictions of Canada's federal, territorial, provincial Indigenous and municipal governments will be respected
- Development should be sustainable and holistic, integrating social, cultural, economic and environmental considerations
- Ongoing reconciliation with Indigenous peoples, using the work of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission as a starting point, is foundational to success
- As climate change is a lived reality in the region, initiatives will take into account its various impacts, including its impact on Indigenous northerners, who continue to rely on the land and wildlife for their culture, traditional economy, and food security
- Policy and programming will reflect a commitment to variability and equality, and to the employment of analytical tools such as Gender-Based Analysis Plus to assess potential impacts on varied groups of people
- The framework will respect a distinctions-based approach to ensure that the unique rights, interests and circumstances of Inuit, Arctic and northern First Nations and Métis are acknowledged, affirmed and implemented
- The Government of Canada recognizes Inuit, First Nations, and Métis as the Indigenous peoples of Canada, consisting of distinct, rights-bearing communities with their own histories, including with the Crown
  - The work of forming renewed relationships based on the recognition of rights, respect, co-operation and partnership must reflect the unique interests, priorities and circumstances of each people

Every sector of society, from the private sector to universities and colleges, the not-for-profit sector, community-based organizations and individual Canadians, has an important part to play in building a strong Canadian Arctic and North.

**“Canada,” Arctic Council [154] <https://arctic-council.org/en/about/states/canada/>**

## Overview:

### Quick Facts

#### **Arctic and North Territory**

Northwest Territories, Nunavut, Yukon, and Northern parts of numerous provinces, including Manitoba, Newfoundland and Labrador, and Québec

#### **Arctic and Northern Population**

Approximately 150,000

#### **Permanent Participants with Canadian constituents**

Arctic Athabaskan Council, Inuit Circumpolar Council, and Gwich'in Council International

## Current & Relevant Information:

### **Canada and the Arctic region**

Nearly 40 percent of Canada's land mass is considered Arctic and Northern, consisting of the Northwest Territories, Nunavut, Yukon, and the northern parts of several provinces. Canada's Arctic is home to approximately 150,000 inhabitants, of which more than half are Indigenous. Although Canada's Arctic region is vast, less than one percent of Canada's population lives there.

### **Indigenous Peoples**

Indigenous Permanent Participants who live in Canada include the Athabaskan, Inuit and Gwich'in. The Athabaskan and Gwich'in peoples in Canada live primarily in the Northwest Territories and Yukon. Inuit in Canada live in 53 communities across Inuit Nunangat – the northern regions of Canada. Canadian Arctic Indigenous peoples are represented in the Arctic Council through three Permanent Participants organizations: Arctic Athabaskan Council, Inuit Circumpolar Council and Gwich'in Council International.

### **Canada in the Arctic Council**

Canada held the first Chair of the Arctic Council from 1996 to 1998, and again from 2013-2015. Canada's primary priorities related to the Arctic include addressing socio-economic and cultural development, environmental protection and climate change, and strengthening relations with Indigenous peoples. Specifically, during its first Arctic Council Chairmanship, Canada's priorities included:

- Youth development in the Arctic, including social, environmental and economic issues affecting children
- Developing closer partnerships with Indigenous peoples and Arctic States to address common challenges and opportunities
- Cooperation between Indigenous Peoples and Arctic States

Throughout its most recent Arctic Council Chairmanship, Canada's priorities included:

- Development for the people of the North
- Mental wellness in Arctic communities
- Integrating Indigenous knowledge of Arctic peoples into the work of the Council
- Environmental protection, including the reduction of black carbon and methane

**Key Accomplishments Include:**

- Canada aided in the establishment of the Arctic Economic Council, an independent forum for business-to-business cooperation
- Canada heavily aided in the development of an action plan to prevent oil pollution in the Arctic
- An Arctic Council Framework for enhanced black carbon and methane emissions reductions
- Assisted in the establishment of the open-access archive project to enhance the public's accessibility to the Arctic Council's work

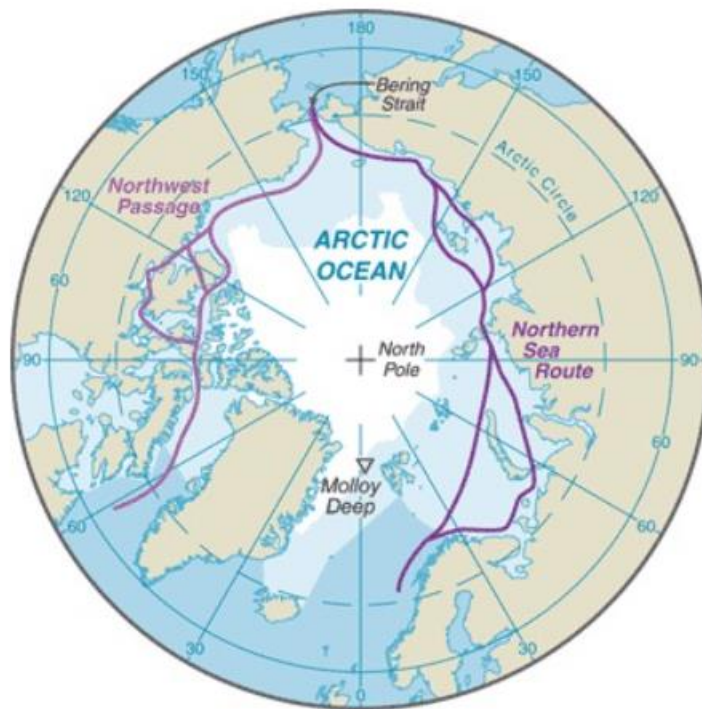
The Arctic Council was established in Canada in 1996 with the signing of the Ottawa Declaration.

**“Arctic Ocean and Canada,” Benjamin Serralheiro-O'Neill, The Canadian Encyclopedia, 12 April 2021 [155]**

<https://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.ca/en/article/arctic-ocean-and-canada>

Overview:

The Arctic Ocean is a body of water centered approximately on the north pole. It is the smallest of Earth's five oceans. Its boundaries are defined by the International Hydrographic Organization, although some other authorities draw them differently. Depending on which definition is used, waters of Canada's Arctic Archipelago are included as part of the ocean, as are major Canadian bodies of water such as Baffin Bay, Hudson Bay and the Beaufort Sea.



The Arctic Ocean, depicted here by the CIA World Factbook, is indicated in light blue. The purple lines indicate various sea routes.

#### Current & Relevant Information:

##### **History**

Human exploration of Canada's Arctic Ocean began about 5,000 years ago with the Sivullirmiut. These people, sometimes called Tunnit or Pre-Dorset, likely travelled from Siberia in search of new lands to inhabit. Four thousand years later the Thule, ancestors of today's Inuit, were the main explorers of Canada's Arctic.

Countless Arctic expeditions took place from the 15th century onwards, as Europeans sought to map the Arctic Ocean. One of the main goals was to find a way to navigate through Canadian Arctic waters from Europe to Asia, connecting the two continents by a relatively short route. This hypothetical route, called the Northwest Passage, was finally navigated successfully in 1906 by Norwegian explorer Roald Amundsen. It continues to be an important shipping lane today.

##### **Industry and Economy**

Subsistence fishing has been a key part of Arctic cultures for millennia. The Inuit and their predecessors relied on ocean mammals, fish and invertebrates for food. This is still the case today for many Arctic coastal communities, although large-scale commercial harvesting is now practiced as well. Some major commercial species include northern and striped shrimp, Greenland halibut, and Arctic char. Other

resources may soon be exploited to. For example, the Government of Canada has invested heavily in the exploration and mapping of the region's oil and gas reserves. A moratorium on their extraction is in place, but it is reviewed every five years.

At the same time, due to slowly receding ice cover, the Arctic Ocean's natural resources are gradually becoming more and more accessible. This will lead to increases in shipping, tourism, and economic development in Canada's Arctic regions. These local activities affect the Arctic Ocean. For example, icebreakers modify their immediate environment as they navigate through sea ice. Increased shipping also means more shipwrecks and oil spills, especially because sea ice can cause serious damage to ships.

## **Politics**

Eight countries surround the Arctic Ocean: Russia, Canada, the United States, Denmark (Greenland), Norway, Sweden, Finland, and Iceland. Almost all Arctic land areas are definitively divided between these countries. However, sovereignty and economic rights over sea areas is a much more contested subject. In 2008, an agreement was signed between Denmark, Norway, Canada, Russia and the United States to attempt to divide up the ocean fairly. It followed the terms set out in the United Nations Law of the Sea Convention. Established in 1982, the Convention provides international guidelines regarding how oceans are used and by whom.

Essentially, a country bordering an ocean – including the Arctic Ocean – is allowed exclusive economic rights over a zone extending 200 nautical miles (about 370 km) beyond its coasts. This means it has permission to explore and exploit non-living resources within that area. In addition, a country can be granted exclusive economic access beyond those 200 nautical miles if it can prove that these additional waters lie above its extended continental shelf. Because of this, all countries involved have scientists studying continental shelves in the hopes they can claim more of the resource-rich Arctic Ocean. For its part, Canada submitted a report to this effect to the United Nations Commission on the Limits of the Continental Shelf in 2019.

**“Canada has created an Arctic conservation zone almost as big as Germany,”**

**Johnny Wood, World Economy Forum, 8 August 2019 [156]**

<https://www.weforum.org/agenda/2019/08/canada-has-created-an-arctic-conservation-zone-almost-as-big-as-germany/>

### Overview:

Canada's Inuit people, whose lands occupy the remote northeastern region of Nunavut, live in an Arctic wilderness of raw natural beauty that is now under threat from climate change.

Prime Minister Justin Trudeau has just turned the area into one of the world's largest conservation areas, to counter the effects of rising temperatures on Arctic marine life and the indigenous people that call it home.

The initiative aims to build a conservation economy, which pairs environmental concerns with economic opportunities for local communities. New jobs will be created, accompanied by stewardship programs aimed at boosting monitoring and conservation of both the land and cultural sites.

In designating the new zone, Trudeau claims to have exceeded his government's target of protecting 10% of Canada's marine and coastal areas by 2020, reaching 14% a year ahead of schedule.

#### Current & Relevant Information:

##### **The last ice area**

The Tuvaijuittuq Marine Protected Area (denoted in red above) covers an area nearly the size of Germany, according to the World Wildlife Fund.

It joins the nearby Tallurutiup Imanga National Marine Conservation Area, formerly known as Lancaster Sound, to create a massive safe habitat for Arctic wildlife.

The zones lie within an area of Canada's high Arctic and Greenland, which is expected to become the last surviving area of summer sea ice in the Arctic.

A large part of the Arctic's ice is melting - and fast. Northern Canada is warming twice as fast as the rest of the planet, causing sea ice to disappear at an alarming rate, according to a recent study by climate researchers.

Permafrost, which has remained frozen for millennia, is melting 70 years ahead of forecasts.

Canadian researchers predict that most Canadian Arctic marine regions will be free of summer ice by 2050, which could be devastating for the Arctic ecosystem.

##### **Ice breaker**

What happens in the Arctic has serious repercussions for the rest of the planet, disrupting ocean currents and causing sea levels to rise. But the immediate impact of climate change is being felt closer to home.

Inuit people use the sea ice as a bridge to travel and hunt. While sea birds and marine creatures, such as whales, polar bears and seals, depend on it for survival.

The scale of the summer thaw is allowing more ships to enter the region, putting animal habitats under increasing threat.

And while the conservation zone should restrict the region's exposure to industrial fishing, mining and drilling for oil and gas, such activities could still pose a threat to the wider marine environment.

## Social Issues:

### **“The Changing Arctic,” WWF.ca [157]**

[https://wwf.ca/habitat/arctic/?gclid=CjwKCAjwoNuGBhA8EiwAFxomA6w4peXCWQOF7zTTm9vS4RIWWY7eJhjwh0BXC16Ehnwg-AVruKY1dhoCYo0QAvD\\_BwE](https://wwf.ca/habitat/arctic/?gclid=CjwKCAjwoNuGBhA8EiwAFxomA6w4peXCWQOF7zTTm9vS4RIWWY7eJhjwh0BXC16Ehnwg-AVruKY1dhoCYo0QAvD_BwE)

#### Overview:

The Arctic makes up almost 55 per cent of Canada’s landmass and two-thirds of our coastline. To many Canadians, it’s an important part of our identity. Inuit have called the Arctic home for thousands of years, and continue to depend on the Arctic ecosystem and its remarkable species such as polar bear, walrus and narwhal.

Today, the Arctic is changing at a record pace. It is warming at three times the average global rate, causing sea ice – the foundation of Arctic life – to melt, changing the face and reality of the region.

#### Current & Relevant Information:

##### **Threats**

Arctic life depends on the annual cycle of sea-ice formation, but climate change is making these cycles less predictable. Ice-dependent species such as polar bears, walrus, narwhals, belugas and bowhead whales are watching their habitats shrink, move and change.

As the ice-free season in the Canadian Arctic gets longer, there are new opportunities for development, economic growth and jobs, particularly in mining and oil and gas. Industrial development introduces changes to Arctic landscapes and the people who depend on them. But economic development in the region is not without risks, including the risk of oil spills, increased underwater noise, disruption from ship traffic, and the introduction of invasive species. These changes can also put the well-being of local communities at risk.

While the impacts of climate change are already being felt by communities, a warming Arctic has ramifications for the whole planet. As the Arctic warms, it has less ability to help cool the planet.

### **“Arctic Ocean and Canada,” Benjamin Serralheiro-O’Neill, The Canadian Encyclopedia, 12 April 2021 [158]**

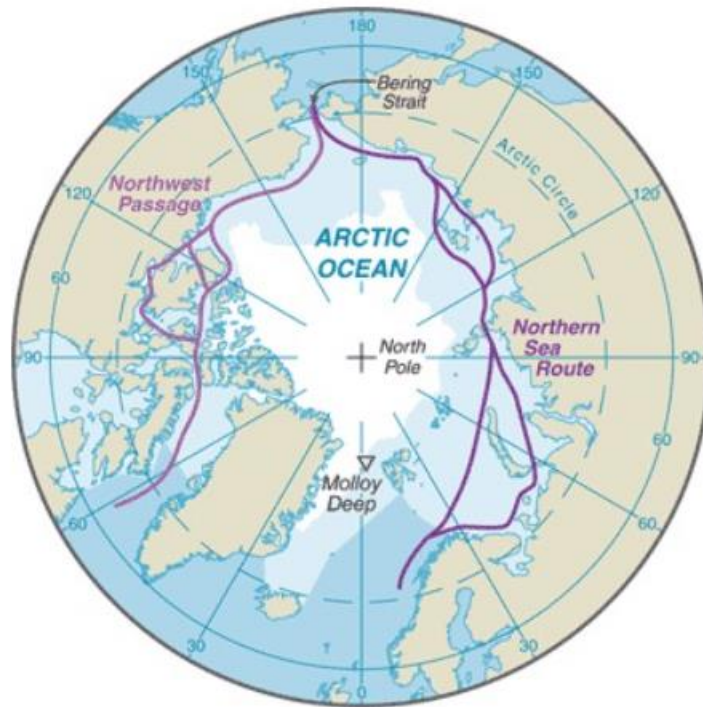
<https://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.ca/en/article/arctic-ocean-and-canada>

#### Overview:

The Arctic Ocean is a body of water centered approximately on the north pole. It is the smallest of Earth’s five oceans. Its boundaries are defined by the International Hydrographic Organization, although some other authorities draw them differently. Depending on which definition is used, waters of Canada’s Arctic Archipelago are



included as part of the ocean, as are major Canadian bodies of water such as Baffin Bay, Hudson Bay and the Beaufort Sea.



The Arctic Ocean, depicted here by the CIA World Factbook, is indicated in light blue. The purple lines indicate various sea routes.

#### Current & Relevant Information:

##### **Sea Ice and Climate Change**

Compared to other oceans, the Arctic is less salty, mostly due to low rates of evaporation. However, its most distinguishing feature is its sea ice, which notably makes the ocean calmer by decreasing wave activity. The perennial sea ice layer — the area which remains frozen year-round — covers about a quarter of the ocean's surface. In late winter and early spring, the entire ocean is covered in ice, including areas all the way down to Hudson Bay and James Bay. However, ice coverage is decreasing as a result of climate change. For example, the minimum extent of sea ice on the Arctic Ocean has decreased 12 per cent per decade since 1979, according to the US National Snow and Ice Data Center. The "minimum extent" refers to the amount of sea ice on the ocean following warmer spring and summer temperatures, usually in the month of September.

This decrease in sea ice means that less sunlight is reflected by bright ice cover, and more of it is absorbed by the darker ocean. In turn, this leads to Arctic Ocean waters warming at an accelerated rate. Moreover, without ice coverage, winds are in

direct contact with the water, creating waves. These waves increase erosion along the vast mainland shores and tens of thousands of islands in Canada's North. However, wind patterns are such that they transport perennial sea ice from all over the Arctic Ocean to the northern border of the Canadian Arctic. Because of this, Canadian waters have lost less perennial sea ice than the rest of the ocean. In the future, this region may be the last to have summer sea ice.

**“Changing the role of non-Indigenous research partners in practice to support Inuit self-determination in research,” K.J. Wilson, et al., Canadian Science Publishing, 25 August 2020 [159] <https://cdnscepub.com/doi/full/10.1139/as-2019-0021>**

Abstract:

Efforts to date have not advanced Indigenous participation, capacity building and knowledge in Arctic environmental science in Canada because Arctic environmental science has yet to acknowledge, or truly practice decolonizing research. The expanding literature on decolonizing and Indigenous research provides guidance towards these alternative research approaches, but less has been written about how you do this in practice and the potential role for non-Indigenous research partners in supporting Inuit self-determination in research. This paper describes the decolonizing methodology of a non-Indigenous researcher partner and presents a co-developed approach, called the Sikumiut model, for Inuit and non-Indigenous researchers interested in supporting Inuit self-determination. In this model the roles of Inuit and non-Indigenous research partners were redefined, with Inuit governing the research and non-Indigenous research partners training and mentoring Inuit youth to conduct the research themselves. The Sikumiut model shows how having Inuit in decision-making positions ensured Inuit data ownership, accessibility, and control over how their Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit is documented, communicated, and respected for its own scientific merit. It examines the benefits and potential to build on the existing research capacity of Inuit youth and describes the guidance and lessons learned from a non-Indigenous researcher in supporting Inuit self-determination in research.

Current & Relevant Information:

**Introduction**

Although Canadian Arctic research programs have developed policies to increase Indigenous participation, capacity building and Indigenous knowledge in Arctic science, Arctic research continues to mostly benefit non-Indigenous researchers, not Indigenous peoples and their communities (Brunet et al. 2014, 2016; ITK 2016a). Indigenous participation has not improved in Arctic environmental science because it has yet to acknowledge how colonialism continues to impact Inuit and contemporary research approaches (Cameron 2012), or truly practice decolonizing research. As a result, universities and research funding programs continue to conduct Arctic

environmental research from conventional, western research perspectives (Wilson 2008; Kovach 2009; Smith 2012a, 2012b; McGrath 2018). However, Inuit are making significant advancements to change the status quo, as demonstrated by the release of the National Inuit Strategy on Research (NISR) to advance Inuit self-determination in research (ITK 2018a).

The expanding literature on decolonizing and Indigenous research provides guidance and principles towards changing current research approaches with Indigenous peoples, but less has been written about how you do this in practice (Morton Ninomiya and Pollock 2017; Gerlach 2018). There are also very few examples that illustrate the potential role for non-Indigenous research partners (Kovach 2009; Gaudry 2015). As the concept of decolonizing research is still in its infancy in Arctic environmental science, there is even less advice for Arctic research funders and non-Indigenous researchers in how to change their current approaches to support Inuit self-determination in research.

The purpose of this paper is to present a decolonizing research methodology for non-Indigenous researchers and a co-developed research model from the community of Mittimatalik (Pond Inlet), Nunavut to support Inuit self-determination in research. This research paper adds to the growing decolonizing research literature by providing Inuit and non-Indigenous researchers with a practical example in which the roles of Inuit and non-Indigenous research partners were redefined.

The first section, positioning myself, provides a personal introduction so readers can understand the positionality of the first author in the research and the authorship of this paper. The next section, A decolonizing methodology for the non-Indigenous researcher, outlines the methodology used in efforts to decolonize oneself in preparation for — and throughout — the research process. From guidance to practice: the Sikumiut model describes how the research relationship was co-developed. Sikumiut, which means “people of the sea ice” in Inuktitut, is the self-titled name of the 10-person committee that governs SmartICE, a community-based sea-ice monitoring program (see [www.SmartICE.org](http://www.SmartICE.org)) in Mittimatalik. Through multiple visits to the community to build trust, establish SmartICE and practice decolonizing research approaches, a research relationship was developed. The Sikumiut model describes how Inuit are governing this research, non-Indigenous research partners are training and mentoring Inuit youth, and Inuit youth are conducting the research to address the community’s research needs. In the Discussion section the fundamental NISR priority of having Inuit in decision-making positions is emphasized as critical for achieving Inuit self-determination in research. Many learning experiences arose in developing the Sikumiut model and are related to securing data ownership, accessibility, and control over how Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit is documented, communicated and respected for its own scientific merit. The benefits, challenges and potential to build on the existing research capacity of Inuit youth are also discussed. To close, reflections and lessons learned

are provided from the perspective of a non-Indigenous researcher in decolonizing oneself, and in practicing decolonizing research to support the greater goal of Inuit self-determination in research.

## **Conclusion**

Decolonizing research is a relatively undeveloped research approach in Arctic environmental science in Canada. Although many attempts have been made to increase Indigenous participation, capacity building, and knowledge, these efforts have not significantly advanced because Arctic environmental science has yet to acknowledge how western research continues to perpetuate colonialism (Cameron 2012) or to sincerely practice decolonizing research.

The Sikumiut model demonstrates that Inuit governance over their research was the single most influential NISR priority that contributed towards the overarching goal of Inuit self-determination in research. Greater support for Indigenous and decolonizing Arctic research is needed to demonstrate how universities, funders, and government institutions can change their current approaches to support Inuit self-determination in research. This research also illustrates how non-Indigenous researchers can support Inuit self-determination in research by creating the space and time within their institutions and themselves to educate and decolonize their roles in the research.

**“Arctic and Northern Policy Framework,” Government of Canada, 22 September 2022 [160] <https://www.rcaanc-cirnac.gc.ca/eng/1560523306861/1560523330587>**

### Overview:

The Arctic and Northern Policy Framework is a profound change of direction for the Government of Canada. For too long, Canada's Arctic and northern residents, especially Indigenous people, have not had access to the same services, opportunities, and standards of living as those enjoyed by other Canadians. There are longstanding inequalities in transportation, energy, communications, employment, community infrastructure, health and education. While almost all past governments have put forward northern strategies, none closed these gaps for the people of the North, or created a lasting legacy of sustainable economic development.

In her 2016 Interim Report on the Shared Arctic Leadership Model, Minister's Special Representative Mary Simon said, "the simple fact is that Arctic strategies throughout my lifetime have rarely matched or addressed the magnitude of the basic gaps between what exists in the Arctic and what other Canadians take for granted."

Co-developing the new framework became a bold opportunity to shape and direct change in the region by collaborating with governments, northerners and Indigenous governments and organizations. Consultation was not enough to meet the challenges and harness emerging opportunities in the Arctic and North. In a significant shift, the federal government, Indigenous peoples, Inuit, First Nations and

Métis, 6 territorial and provincial governments (Yukon, Northwest Territories, Nunavut, Newfoundland and Labrador, Quebec, and Manitoba) contributed to this framework together.

#### Current & Relevant Information:

##### **A shared vision**

Today, there is a shared vision of the future where northern and Arctic people are thriving, strong and safe. The Arctic and Northern Policy Framework gives us a roadmap to achieve this vision. There are clear priorities and actions set out by the federal government and its partners to:

- nurture healthy families and communities
- invest in the energy, transportation and communications infrastructure that northern and Arctic governments, economies and communities need
- create jobs, foster innovation and grow Arctic and northern economies
- support science, knowledge and research that is meaningful for communities and for decision-making
- face the effects of climate change and support healthy ecosystems in the Arctic and North
- ensure that Canada and our northern and Arctic residents are safe, secure and well-defended
- restore Canada's place as an international Arctic leader
- advance reconciliation and improve relationships between Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples

For the federal government, the framework's goals will guide investments and activities, through 2030. Implementing the Arctic and Northern Policy Framework will require collaborative approaches. Our government recognizes that 'made in Ottawa' policies have not been successful. The new approach puts the future into the hands of the people who live there to realize the promise of the Arctic and the North.

Through the co-development of the framework, and by working in partnership to realize its vision and implement its goals and objectives, this initiative will advance reconciliation and renew Canada's relationship with Inuit, First Nations, Métis and support the non-Indigenous residents of Canada's Arctic and North.

A crucial element of this innovative, cooperative form of policy making is the inclusion of chapters from our Indigenous, territorial and provincial partners. Through these chapters, our partners speak directly to Canadians and to the world, expressing their own visions, aspirations and priorities. These critical components of the Arctic and Northern Policy Framework map out areas of present and future

collaboration between partners and the Government of Canada, and will provide guidance on the implementation of the framework.

In reflecting their priorities and aspirations, these chapters recognize and advance the vision and interests of Inuit, First Nations and Métis peoples. Partners have chosen their own approaches to crafting these chapters. For example, Yukon First Nations and the Government of Yukon have collaborated closely during the development of the Arctic and Northern Policy Framework, and will be producing separate chapters that speak to their mutual as well as distinct interests. First Nations and Métis worked with the Government of the Northwest Territories to draft the Northwest Territories chapter of the framework.

Inuit Nunangat is the Inuit homeland in Canada. Inuit are the majority population in this distinct geographic, cultural, and political region. In order to respect and support Inuit self-determination, an Inuit Nunangat chapter was developed as an Inuit-Crown Partnership Committee deliverable. This chapter will guide how Arctic and Northern Policy Framework goals and objectives are implemented in Inuit Nunangat. This will ensure that the framework respects Inuit rights and that an Inuit Nunangat approach is utilized in the development and implementation of federal policies and programs that are intended to benefit Inuit, creating efficiencies that in turn benefit all Canadians.

Territorial governments have authored chapters setting out their priorities for new investments and approaches in areas such as economic development, infrastructure and post-secondary education. Yukon, Northwest Territories and Nunavut are also contributing a pan-territorial chapter that articulates their common challenges and opportunities. Drawing on the 2017 Pan-Territorial Vision for Sustainable Development, the territorial governments offer their vision for how the Arctic and Northern Policy Framework can support strong and healthy communities, based on a foundation of responsible resource development, economic diversification, infrastructure and innovation.

The next phase of framework co-development will focus on implementation, investment strategies and governance, moving towards more integrated federal-territorial-provincial and Indigenous approaches to challenges and opportunities in Canada's Arctic and North. Partner chapters will be integral to this next step towards improving the quality of life for our Arctic and Northern residents, especially for Indigenous peoples.

## **Our future**

The Arctic and Northern Policy Framework is ambitious and has just over 10 years to translate its goals and objectives into reality. In that time, the Government of Canada and its partners will close the gaps that exist between this region, particularly in relation to its Indigenous peoples, and the rest of the country.

Canada sees a future in which the people of the Arctic and North are full participants in Canadian society, with access to the same services, opportunities and standards of living as those enjoyed by other Canadians. This ambition will require greater effort, focus, trust and collaboration amongst partners.

Other circumpolar nations are making significant investments to make their Arctic regions part of the global community. Supporting Canadian initiatives to keep pace with international efforts will bring increased opportunities, health and well-being to Indigenous peoples and northerners.

Indigenous and Northern leaders have offered their best innovative, adaptive policy solutions that call for trust, inclusiveness and transparency. We can do no less than to respond with integrity, collaboration and openness. Building on these new partnerships, the Arctic and Northern Policy Framework provides a long-term foundation for transformative change, benefiting our Arctic, its Indigenous peoples, northern residents and all Canadians.

### **Conclusion: Next steps**

The development of this framework has strengthened collaborative relationships between framework partners and among federal government departments. This development of new ways of working together is, in itself, a significant achievement.

In the second phase of the framework, governance mechanisms will be co-developed through discussions among framework partners, the governments and Indigenous peoples' organizations that worked together on the first part of the framework. These mechanisms will describe how partners will regularly collaborate to share information and assess progress on framework implementation, building on significant developments in governance over the last 50 years. Governance mechanisms will:

- support the jurisdictional and institutional landscape created by devolution, modern treaties and land claim and self-government agreements
- adhere to the principles of partnership articulated in *A New Shared Arctic Leadership Model*, the final report of Mary Simon, the Minister's Special Representative on Arctic Leadership
- meet partners' expectations for meaningful, ongoing involvement in policy decisions related to their interests
- provide a forum for all partners to be regularly convened for collaborative discussions on implementation of the framework
- commit to reconciliation in the context of renewed federal-provincial-territorial-Indigenous relationships



- ensure that existing fora, such as the Inuit Crown Partnership Committee, the Yukon Forum, and the Intergovernmental Council of the Northwest Territories, are leveraged to assist in implementation
- reflect the authorities and powers of territorial, provincial and Indigenous governments

Financial investment in the framework will be an integral element of its success. Partners will work together to develop an implementation and investment plan. The plan will outline how new investments together with other economic and regulatory levers will be used to contribute to implementation of the framework.

The implementation and investment plan will:

- define new investments
- provide information on how partners' funding initiatives are aligned with and supportive of the goals and objectives described in the ANPF policy statement, including in partner chapters
- provide strategic alignment and flexibility of investments to accommodate the unique nature of 'doing business' in the Arctic and north
- define indicators, data collection and reporting commitments related to specific funding and initiatives

### **Annex: Principles for the Arctic and Northern Policy Framework**

The principles below were developed to provide continuing guidance on implementation of the framework.

- Decisions about the Arctic and the North will be made in partnership with and with the participation of northerners, to reflect the rights, needs and perspectives of northerners
- The rights and jurisdictions of Canada's federal, territorial, provincial Indigenous and municipal governments will be respected
- Development should be sustainable and holistic, integrating social, cultural, economic and environmental considerations
- Ongoing reconciliation with Indigenous peoples, using the work of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission as a starting point, is foundational to success
- As climate change is a lived reality in the region, initiatives will take into account its various impacts, including its impact on Indigenous northerners, who continue to rely on the land and wildlife for their culture, traditional economy, and food security

- Policy and programming will reflect a commitment to variability and equality, and to the employment of analytical tools such as Gender-Based Analysis Plus to assess potential impacts on varied groups of people
- The framework will respect a distinctions-based approach to ensure that the unique rights, interests and circumstances of Inuit, Arctic and northern First Nations and Métis are acknowledged, affirmed and implemented
- The Government of Canada recognizes Inuit, First Nations, and Métis as the Indigenous peoples of Canada, consisting of distinct, rights-bearing communities with their own histories, including with the Crown
  - The work of forming renewed relationships based on the recognition of rights, respect, co-operation and partnership must reflect the unique interests, priorities and circumstances of each people

Every sector of society, from the private sector to universities and colleges, the not-for-profit sector, community-based organizations and individual Canadians, has an important part to play in building a strong Canadian Arctic and North.

**“Indigenous and non-Indigenous people experiencing homelessness and mental illness in two Canadian cities: A retrospective analysis and implications for culturally informed action,” Brittany Bingham, et al., BMJ Journals, 2019 [161]**  
<https://bmjopen.bmj.com/content/9/4/e024748>

Abstract:

**Objectives** Indigenous people in Canada are not only over-represented among the homeless population but their pathways to homelessness may differ from those of non-Indigenous people. This study investigated the history and current status of Indigenous and non-Indigenous people experiencing homelessness and mental illness. We hypothesized that compared with non-Indigenous people, those who are Indigenous would demonstrate histories of displacement earlier in life, higher rates of trauma and self-medication with alcohol and other substances.

**Design and setting** Retrospective data were collected from a sample recruited through referral from varied social and health agencies in Winnipeg and Vancouver.

**Participants** Eligibility included being 19 years or older, current mental disorder and homelessness.

**Measures Data** were collected via interviews, using questionnaires, on socio-demographics (e.g., age, ethnicity, education), mental illness, substance use, physical health, service use and quality of life. Univariate and multivariable models were used to model the association between Indigenous ethnicity and dependent variables.

**Results** A total of 1010 people met the inclusion criteria, of whom 439 self-identified as Indigenous. In adjusted models, Indigenous ethnicity was independently associated with being homeless at a younger age, having a lifetime duration of homelessness longer than 3 years, post-traumatic stress disorder, less severe mental disorder, alcohol dependence, more severe substance use in the past month and infectious disease. Indigenous participants were also nearly twice as likely as others (47% vs 25%) to have children younger than 18 years.

**Conclusions** Among Canadians who are homeless and mentally ill, those who are Indigenous have distinct histories and current needs that are consistent with the legacy of colonization. Responses to Indigenous homelessness must be developed within the context of reconciliation between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Canadians, addressing trauma, substance use and family separations.

#### Current & Relevant Information:

#### **Background**

Indigenous (The term 'Indigenous' will be used throughout this paper to collectively describe the Indigenous peoples of Canada, inclusive of those who identify as 'Aboriginal' or First Nations, Métis and Inuit. This term is used while also acknowledging the variability of cultures, languages and traditions that exist among Indigenous Canadians) people are over-represented among homeless populations in every part of the world where these rates are documented. Indigenous people struggling with mental illness, substance use or homelessness often share experiences involving structural inequities and trauma related to colonization. Despite a visible presence of Indigenous peoples in the urban homeless populations of North America, Australia and New Zealand, there is limited research investigating the prevalence and causes of Indigenous homelessness. Indigenous Australians comprise 9% of the homeless population compared with 3.3% of the general population. Similarly, in New Zealand, Maori homelessness has been reported to be five times that of non-Maori. In Canada, homelessness among Indigenous people is eight times more prevalent than among all others. Indigenous people comprise about 6% of British Columbia's population, yet in 2018 accounted for 40% of Vancouver's homeless of whom close to half are unsheltered (46%). The Vancouver area is home to approximately 62 000 Indigenous people representing 23% of B.C.'s Indigenous population. Women accounted for 53% of the Indigenous homeless people in Vancouver, and 46% were under 25. Homelessness among youth has increased in Vancouver, with those under 25 representing 24% of the overall homeless population.

Pathways to homelessness integrate poverty, mental illness, addiction, lack of affordable housing and socioeconomic inequities. The high prevalence of mental illness among the homeless is related to sustained disinvestment in institutional models of care and insufficient attention to the design and implementation of

community-based approaches to delivering housing and support. Fragmentation between systems responsible for healthcare and social services amplifies the challenges faced by people who are mentally ill and homeless. Many marginalized and homeless people must navigate a maze of multiple systems to receive essential supports, leading one scholar to describe them as ‘system survivors.’

Multidisciplinary models integrating primary care and specialized services have been recommended for people with multiple and complex needs.

Indigenous pathways to homelessness are likely inclusive of the above factors. In addition, current inequities in the health of Indigenous peoples are directly related to past and present colonial policies that created and sustain systemic racism, cultural oppression, disempowerment and dispossession of Indigenous peoples’ lands. The Indian Act (1876) and related policies served to dispossess Indigenous peoples of land, disrupt the practice and transmission of traditional knowledge, undermine the matriarchal role of women and remove generations of children from their communities into settings where abuse was widespread. Canada’s Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) identified the residential school era as the beginning of intergenerational cycles of trauma for Indigenous Canadians, and concluded that the actions taken under the Indian Act and related policies amounted to ‘cultural genocide’.

Child welfare policies continue to separate Indigenous children from their families and communities. Indigenous youth are vastly over-represented in the child welfare system and foster care, disrupting Indigenous families and contributing to homelessness. In Canada, Indigenous children and youth are 15 times more likely to be in government care than non-Indigenous children and youth. The ‘60s scoop refers to a time at the height of the residential school era in the ‘50s and ‘60s, where an amendment to the Canadian Indian Act gave provinces authority over their child protection policies, leading to a dramatic increase in the number of Indigenous children in the child welfare system. Trauma arising from these experiences affects communities across generations.

These differences have led to the development of a distinct definition of Indigenous homelessness in Canada: ‘Unlike the common colonialist definition of homelessness, Indigenous homelessness is not defined as lacking a structure of habitation; rather, it is more fully described and understood through a composite lens of Indigenous worldviews. These include: individuals, families and communities isolated from their relationships to land, water, place, family, kin, each other, animals, cultures, languages and identities. Importantly, Indigenous people experiencing these kinds of homelessness cannot culturally, spiritually, emotionally or physically reconnect with their indigeneity or lost relationships’. A related insight can be found in the final report of the TRC, which examined the urgent and complex relationships between Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples in Canada and does

not mention the term 'homelessness' at all, but includes the term 'home' 146 times, usually in the context of loss and enforced separation.

Among relevant empirical studies, disparities have been reported concerning Indigenous peoples' access to appropriate and responsive primary healthcare. Pervasive racism and discrimination against Indigenous peoples in the Canadian healthcare system has been widely reported and, in many cases, has led to Indigenous patients strategizing for how to avoid racism before seeking care or avoiding care altogether. Despite the high need (HN) for mental health, substance use and healthcare among homeless populations there remain substantial gaps in research examining the implications of historical and current differences between Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples as they relate to policies and services addressing homelessness. The need for further research into the effects of ethnicity on homelessness has been well established. Indeed, few studies have examined the potential upstream causal factors that contribute to the over-representation of Indigenous people among the homeless. Such information is essential to the development of effective policies.

The current study investigated differences between Indigenous and non-Indigenous people who experienced homelessness and mental illness, and whether differences are consistent with distinct trajectories leading to homelessness. We hypothesized that Indigenous participants would be more likely to have experienced homelessness earlier in life and have higher prevalence of trauma and substance use, and that non-Indigenous participants would be more likely to experience serious mental illness such as schizophrenia.

**“Societal Impacts of a Rapidly Changing Arctic,” Kathrin Stephen, Current Climate Change Reports, 2018 [162]**

<https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s40641-018-0106-1>

Abstract:

This review article makes six observations about the current body of research on the societal impacts of a changing Arctic. First, climate change and globalization are the dominant drivers of societal impacts in the Arctic. Second, many contributions focus on the impacts in concrete sectors of society, often from an opportunities-and-risks perspective, which tends to blur the boundary to more policy-oriented work. Third, the mantra of the sustainable development of the Arctic or Arctic sustainability pervades considerations of Arctic societal impacts. Fourth, societal and environment change in the Arctic is increasingly analyzed using the image of the Global Arctic, highlighting the inextricable linkages between Arctic and global processes and systems and thus the entangled fate of the North and the entire globe. Fifth, an increasing number of actors is seen as being involved in societal and environmental transformations in the Arctic, often conveyed through the (often ill-defined) stakeholder concept. Sixth, Arctic indigenous peoples are depicted as the group

most vulnerable to the societal impacts of a changing Arctic, but are increasingly the subject of research in the form of rights-holders and active participants in governance, law, politics, and research. Challenges for future research include achieving greater clarity and reflexivity around key concepts, and de-essentializing the Arctic via the use of comparative methods on cases both within and beyond the Arctic.

#### Current & Relevant Information:

### **The Ultimate Drivers of Arctic Change: Climate Change and Globalization**

The Arctic consists of an ocean surrounded by the northern fringes of the Eurasian and North American landmasses. Its southern limits are defined variously as the Arctic Circle at 66° northern latitude, the tree line, the July 10 °C isotherm or permafrost extent. But jurisdictional, administrative, and political lines are also used for delimiting the Arctic's southern boundaries, for example as in the Arctic Human Development Report. Ultimately, there is no single given 'Arctic' area, but several definitions of a region that has historically seen many, socially constructed, demarcations of its southern fringes. Regions in this area are home to a highly varied and often unique flora and fauna as well as to people, including indigenous groups, who have lived for a long time in, and adapted to, some of the most extreme climatic, weather, and daylight conditions on the planet. Socio-ecological systems in Arctic regions are also highly vulnerable in light of the extreme conditions to which these relationships are adapted, including short growing seasons, long distances, low population densities, and few opportunities to replace or substitute food and other items necessary for survival and everyday life, especially in the polar barrens of the High Arctic. On the other hand, the Arctic is a highly varied region with bustling cities like Tromsø, Reykjavik, and Rovaniemi, and has well-developed infrastructure, especially on the European side of the Arctic. Different geographic realities, demographic structures, political and legal systems, and images of the Arctic as a region make for varying impacts of and responses to global change processes like climate change and globalization in different Arctic areas.

While change has been termed a normal state of affairs in the Arctic, the pace and extent of current ecological and societal transformations are unprecedented. They are also accompanied by a high level of uncertainty concerning the future guise of Arctic change and its mid- to long-term impacts. Climate change is seen as the most pervasive and powerful driver of change, with temperatures in the Arctic having risen twice as rapidly as the global average over the past 50 years (a phenomenon called Arctic Amplification). Predictions regarding Arctic climate change include a 4–5 °C increase above late twentieth century values before the middle of this century; sea ice extent and thickness continuing on a long-term downward trend with the latter having decreased by 65% between 1975 and 2012; an ice-free Arctic Ocean in summer by the late 2030s, with likely effects such as accelerating climate change through the exposure of dark land and ocean surfaces that absorb more heat; the

thawing of permafrost with effects on carbon storage and release in the Arctic; changing and more extreme weather patterns in mid-latitudes; altered ocean circulation due to increasing freshwater storage in the Arctic Ocean; and the melting of Arctic land-based ice—especially in Greenland—contributing up to 25 cm of sea-level rise by 2100.

In addition to the numerous effects of climate change, rapid social and economic developments, such as migration, tourism, resource extraction, shifting political relations, geopolitics, and more generally the forces of globalization, have far-reaching impacts on the Arctic's social, ecological, and socio-ecological systems. From a historical point of view, the Arctic has been part of globalization processes for a long time, for example in the form of economic integration and trade relationships during the fur trade and whale hunting days, which in some parts of the Arctic date back as far as the sixteenth century. But the pace of globalization and its impacts has increased in recent years, with the Arctic said to become relevant for global trade networks, resource supply chains, and increasingly embedded in information and communication systems.

Other globalization processes that are deemed relevant for Arctic transformations are political power transitions in the global order—especially the shift from a unipolar to a multipolar order—and the increasing attention of traditionally understood non-Arctic states towards the Arctic. The ever-increasing number and complexity of international organizations, legal agreements, and norms that relate to the Arctic is also increasingly scrutinized by Arctic researchers especially concerning the marine Arctic. The role of the (international) media in the presentation of climate change, and the framing of current and future Arctic narratives, is an interesting new field of research. Finally, cultural globalization in the form of global, or predominantly western, cultural trends like certain consumption patterns, increasing usage of information technology, and emancipated orientations towards gender equality, participation, and protest cultures increasingly penetrate and socially and culturally transform Arctic societies.

The following sections highlight three categories of societal impacts of climate change and globalization processes in the Arctic. These are (1) the impacts on specific societal sectors, (2) impacts on Arctic peoples and players, and (3) cross-cutting themes of Arctic societal impacts, comprising the mantra of sustainable development and sustainability and the tale of the Global Arctic. For reasons of scope, this article focuses on the current English literature, but it deserves mentioning that there is a vast and growing literature on the topic in other languages as well. Moreover, the article predominantly, but not exclusively, reviews the literature of the past five years, and therefore reflects the large number of books and edited volumes on Arctic societal change that was published during this timeframe. A concluding section makes six observations about the state of current research,



and suggests pathways for future research on the societal impacts of a changing Arctic.

#### B. Denmark (Greenland):

**“Greenland ice sheet,” Sanat Pai Raikar, Britannica, 29 November 2024 [163]**  
<https://www.britannica.com/place/Greenland-Ice-Sheet>

##### Overview:

**Greenland Ice Sheet**, the single [ice sheet](#) or [glacier](#) covering about 80 percent of the island of [Greenland](#) and the largest [ice](#) mass in the Northern Hemisphere, globally second in size to only the ice mass that covers [Antarctica](#). It extends 1,380 miles (2,220 km) north-south, has a maximum width of 680 miles (1,094 km) near its northern margin, and has an average thickness of about 5,000 feet (1,500 metres). The Greenland Ice Sheet extends from approximately 60° N to 80° N and thus is not in the polar zone, unlike the Antarctic Ice Sheet. The Greenland Ice Sheet is protected by cold waters of mostly [Arctic](#) origin against the [temperate Atlantic](#) waters from the southeast. In volume it contains 12 percent of the world's glacier ice, and, if it completely melted, [sea level](#) would rise 24 feet (7.4 meters).

##### Current & Relevant Information:

The Inuit are believed to have crossed to northwest Greenland from [North America](#), using the islands of the Canadian Arctic as stepping-stones, in a series of migrations that stretched from at least 2500 BCE to the early 2nd millennium CE. Although the Swedish explorer Baron Nordenskiöld ventured onto the ice sheet in 1870 and 1883, the first known crossing was made by the Norwegian [Fridtjof Nansen](#) and his party in 1888, traveling from Angmagssalik (Tasiilaq) to Godthåb (Nuuk). [Subsequent](#) explorations include those by [Robert Peary](#) and [Knud Rasmussen](#).

Geological records show the presence of the ice sheet since the [Eocene Epoch](#), about 56 million to 33.9 million years ago. Deep-sea sediment cores from northeast Greenland, the Fram Strait, and the south of Greenland suggest that the Greenland Ice Sheet has continuously existed since 18 million years ago. More-numerous glaciation records are seen after about 14 million years ago, during the Middle [Miocene](#). A warm interval occurred about 2.4 million years ago, as evidenced by a unit, 328 feet (100 meters) thick, of sand, silt, and clay in northern Greenland. The period from 424,000 to 374,000 years ago is considered to be the best [analog](#) to the current global climate, and during this phase Greenland is thought to have been almost ice-free. This geological evidence is often cited by researchers who argue that the Greenland Ice Sheet will soon disappear as global temperatures rise. Most of the ice is believed to have formed during an [ice age](#) from 188,000 to 130,000 years ago. The ice sheet expanded during the final [Pleistocene](#) glacial

advance until about 24,000 years ago, when it covered an area 40 percent larger than its current extent.

The Greenland Ice Sheet occupies a saucerlike [basin](#) that has a bedrock surface near sea level under most of Greenland. The ice mass, covering an area of 708,100 square miles (1,833,900 square km), is contained by coastal mountains on the east and west. It is thicker in the centre than along its margins and rises to two domes. The northern dome, located in east-central Greenland and reaching more than 10,000 feet (3,000 metres) above sea level, is the area of maximum thickness of the ice sheet and has the lowest mean annual temperature on the ice sheet (−24 °F [−31 °C]). It is separated from the southern dome (8,200 feet [2,500 metres] in elevation) by a depression with a maximum elevation of 7,900 feet (2,400 metres) that runs from the Disko Bay area in the west to the Angmagssalik area in the southeast. The movement of the ice sheet is principally outward from the crest of the ice divide. The margin of the ice sheet reaches the sea in the area of Melville Bay southeast of Thule in the form of large outlet glaciers that calve off into the ocean, producing numerous [icebergs](#).

In the 1970s the Greenland Ice Sheet Program was organized by scientists from the [United States](#), [Denmark](#), and Switzerland. Deep ice cores from the Greenland Ice Sheet were obtained for comparison with deep cores from the Antarctic ice mass to gain a better understanding of the factors controlling present and past ice mass [dynamics](#), atmospheric processes, and the response of ice sheets to [climatic change](#) and to determine whether past changes in climate were global or regional in character. Studies of ice cores have also revealed a detailed stratigraphic record of glaciation and vegetation in Greenland. The period from the last glaciation to the present is preserved through fossil records, and it thus provides a record of the flora and fauna of Greenland.

Loss of mass of the Greenland Ice Sheet since the 1990s is well documented, with the ice loss accelerating in the 21st century. The ice loss has been driven by a drop in the surface mass balance (SMB) of the ice sheet itself, caused by [solar radiation](#), air temperature, and amount of precipitation, as well as sharp losses due to iceberg calving. With continued melting, fjords are widening, and this in turn is allowing heat from the air to seep to glacier bases. The [consequence](#) of all these changes is an increase in the movement rate of glaciers, which results in further iceberg releases. The Greenland Ice Sheet is thus believed to have contributed 0.4 inch (10.6 mm) to the global sea level rise since the 1990s.

**“Greenland,” Rasmus Ole Rasmussen, Britannica, 14 December 2024 [\[164\]](#)**  
<https://www.britannica.com/place/Greenland>

#### Overview:

Greenland, the world's largest island, lying in the North Atlantic Ocean. Greenland is noted for its vast tundra and immense glaciers.

Although Greenland remains part of the [Kingdom of Denmark](#), the island's home-rule government is responsible for most domestic affairs. The Greenlandic people are primarily [Inuit](#) who, depending upon the region they are from, call themselves Kalaallit (West Greenlanders), Inugguit (from [Thule](#) district), or lit (East Greenlanders). They call their homeland Kalaallit Nunaat ("Country of the Greenlanders"). The capital of Greenland is [Nuuk](#) (Godthåb).

#### Current & Relevant Information:

##### **Land**

More than three times the size of the U.S. state of [Texas](#), Greenland extends about 1,660 miles (2,670 km) from north to south and more than 650 miles (1,050 km) from east to west at its widest point. Two-thirds of the island lies within the [Arctic Circle](#), and the island's northern extremity extends to within less than 500 miles (800 km) of the [North Pole](#). Greenland is separated from [Canada](#)'s [Ellesmere Island](#) to the north by only 16 miles (26 km). The nearest European country is [Iceland](#), lying about 200 miles (320 km) across the [Denmark Strait](#) to the southeast. Greenland's deeply indented coastline is 24,430 miles (39,330 km) long, a distance roughly equivalent to Earth's circumference at the Equator.

A submarine ridge no deeper than 600 feet (180 metres) connects the island physically with [North America](#). Structurally, Greenland is an extension of the [Canadian Shield](#), the rough plateau of the Canadian North that is made up of hard [Precambrian](#) rocks.

Greenland's major physical feature is its massive ice sheet, which is second only to [Antarctica](#)'s in size. The [Greenland Ice Sheet](#) has an average thickness of 5,000 feet (1,500 metres), reaches a maximum thickness of about 10,000 feet (3,000 metres), and covers more than 700,000 square miles (1,800,000 square km)—over four-fifths of Greenland's total land area. Layers of snow falling on its barren, windswept surface become compressed into ice layers, which constantly move outward to the [peripheral glaciers](#); the Jakobshavn Glacier, often moving 100 feet (30 metres) a day, is among the world's fastest glaciers. The remaining ice-free land area occupies the country's coastal areas and consists largely of highlands; mountain chains parallel the island's east and west coasts, rising to 12,139 feet (3,700 metres) at [Gunnbjørn Mountain](#) in the southeast. These highlands notwithstanding, most parts of the rock floor underlying the Greenland Ice Sheet are in fact at or slightly beneath current sea levels.



[iceberg near Greenland](#)

Long, deep fjords reach far into both the east and west coasts of Greenland in complex systems, offering magnificent, if desolate, scenery. Along many parts of the coast, the ice sheet fronts directly on the sea, with large chunks breaking off the glaciers and sliding into the water as [icebergs](#).

The [climate](#) of Greenland is Arctic, modified only by the slight influence of the [Gulf Stream](#) in the southwest. Rapid weather changes, from sunshine to impenetrable blizzards, are common and result from the eastward progression of low-pressure air masses over a permanent layer of cold air above the island's icy interior. Average winter (January) temperatures range from the low 20s F (about  $-7^{\circ}\text{C}$ ) in the south to approximately  $-30^{\circ}\text{F}$  (about  $-34^{\circ}\text{C}$ ) in the north. Summer temperatures along the southwestern coast average in the mid-40s F (about  $7^{\circ}\text{C}$ ) during July, while the average in the far north is closer to  $40^{\circ}\text{F}$  (about  $4^{\circ}\text{C}$ ). Greenland experiences about two months of [midnight sun](#) during the summer. Average annual precipitation decreases from more than 75 inches (1,900 mm) in the south to about 2 inches (50 mm) in the north. Large areas of the island can be classified as Arctic deserts because of their limited precipitation.

In the late 20th and early 21st centuries, scientists [posited](#) that [global warming](#) was profoundly affecting not only Greenland's climate but also its physical geography. A number of scientists noted that Greenland's vast ice sheet was shrinking at a highly increased rate. In 2012, for example, [satellites](#) revealed that at midyear 97 percent of the ice sheet showed some signs of melting, whereas in most years the melt affected only about half of the ice sheet. Researchers were uncertain, however, if the abrupt ice loss represented a long-term trend, but in 2016, as global warming pushed the planet toward the hottest January, February, March, April, and May in its

history (according to [NASA](#)), Greenland also experienced a series of record early spikes in the melting of its ice sheets.

The country's plant life is [characterized](#) mainly as [tundra](#) vegetation and consists of such plants as sedge and cotton grass. Plantlike [lichens](#) also are common. The limited ice-free areas are almost totally devoid of trees, although some dwarfed birch, willow, and alder scrub do manage to survive in sheltered valleys in the south. Several species of land mammals—including polar bears, [musk oxen](#), [reindeer](#), Arctic foxes, snow hares, ermines, and lemmings—can be found on the island. Seals and whales are found in the surrounding waters and were formerly the chief source of nourishment for the Greenlanders. Cod, salmon, flounder, and halibut are important saltwater [fish](#), and the island's rivers contain salmon and Arctic char.

### People of Greenland

Nearly nine-tenths of Greenlanders are principally of [Inuit](#) extraction. They identify themselves as Kalaallit (West Greenlanders), Inuguit (from [Thule](#) district), or lit (East Greenlanders), depending upon their region. They are very strongly admixed with early European immigrant strains. More than one-tenth of the people are Danish, most of them born in [Denmark](#).

The official languages of the island are Kalaallisut (West Greenlandic) and Danish (a [Scandinavian, or North Germanic](#), language). Greenlandic is an umbrella term for the [dialects](#) of the [Inuit language](#) spoken on the island; Inuit belongs to the [Eskimo-Aleut \(Eskaleut\)](#) language family. The Kalaallisut [dialect](#) is spoken by the great majority of the people of Greenland. The Tunumiit (East Greenlandic) and Inuktun, or Avanersuarmitut (Polar, or Northern, Greenlandic), dialects are spoken by smaller groups of people. English is also spoken.

Evangelical [Lutheranism](#) is the official religion. It is followed by nearly two-thirds of the population; about one-third of Greenlanders follow other forms of Christianity. Traditional beliefs, including [shamanism](#), are still practiced by a small minority.

The population of Greenland (Kalaallit Nunaat) is widely dispersed. The large majority of people live in one of the island's 18 municipalities. The remainder live in villages.

Because of emigration levels, Greenland's population growth rate was about zero at the start of the 21st century. Life expectancy is [comparable](#) to the world average, males typically living into their mid-60s and females generally living into their early 70s.

**“The Kingdom of Denmark,” Arctic Council** [\[165\]](#) <https://arctic-council.org/en/about/states/denmark/>

Overview:

**Quick Facts**

## **Population**

Greenland: 55,992 (January 2019)

The Faroe Islands: 52,124 (January 2020)

Denmark: 5,822,763 (January 2020)

## **Arctic Indigenous Peoples**

Inuit

### Current & Relevant Information:

#### **The Kingdom of Denmark in the Arctic region**

The Kingdom consists of three parts – Denmark, Greenland and the Faroe Islands – and, by virtue of Greenland is centrally located as a coastal state in the Arctic. This involves specific rights and obligations in the region. Today, both Greenland and the Faroe Islands have extensive self-government.

The Faroe Islands and Greenland have had home rule since 1948 and 1979, respectively. Home rule arrangements have been continuously modernized, most recently by the Takeover Act on Power of Matters and Fields of Responsibility and the Act on Faroes Foreign Policy Powers of 2005 in the Faroe Islands, and the Greenland Self-Government Act of 2009.

The three parts of the Realm share a number of values and interests and all have a responsibility in and for the Arctic region.

In an equal partnership between the three parts of the Danish Realm, the Kingdom of Denmark speaks with one voice in the Arctic Council.

#### **About Greenland**

Greenland is the world's largest non-continental island and is geographically located on the North American continent. However, in terms of geopolitics, it is a part of Europe. Greenland's icecap covers 81 percent of its area, leaving 15 percent of the coastline inhabitable. There are 17 towns and 58 villages located throughout the country. The population density is the lowest in the world. Counting the ice-free areas only, the population is a mere 0.3 persons per square kilometer.

Greenlanders are descendants from the Inuit Thule Culture. The Thule people were strong hunters, so traditionally hunting had been the most important source for survival of the Greenlandic people. Today, approximately 10 percent of the workforce is involved in the hunting industry. Fishing is Greenland's primary industry, with major exports including shrimps, Greenland halibut and cod. Greenland is home to many mineral resources, including gold, rubies, diamonds, coppers, Rare Earth Elements and oil. The Tourism sector is also increasing, with tourist numbers rising. Greenland places an emphasis on developing sustainable tourism.

## Denmark

Denmark is the southernmost of the Scandinavian countries, and consists of a peninsula, Jutland and an archipelago of 443 named islands, with the largest being Zealand, Funen and the North Jutlandic Island. Over 5.8 million people lives in Denmark. Denmark, Greenland and the Faroe Islands are equal entities within the Kingdom of Denmark. The Self-Government Arrangements transfer political competence and responsibility from the Danish political authorities to the Greenlandic and Faroese authorities. The Danish Government constitutionally conducts Foreign and Security policy of the Kingdom of Denmark in close cooperation with the Governments of Greenland and the Faroe Islands. The Danish Armed Forces undertake important tasks in the Arctic including the enforcement of sovereignty.

**“Danes see Greenland security risk amid Arctic tensions,” Laurence Peter, BBC News, 29 November 2019 [166] <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-50598898>**

### Overview:

Denmark has for the first time put mineral-rich Greenland top of its national security agenda, ahead of terrorism and cybercrime.

The Defence Intelligence Service (FE) linked its change in priorities to US interest in Greenland, expressed in President Donald Trump's desire to buy the vast Arctic territory.

Greenland is part of Denmark, but has significant autonomy, including freedom to sign major business deals.

China has mining deals with Greenland.

The FE's head Lars Findsen said Greenland was now a top security issue for Denmark because a "power game is unfolding" between the US and other global powers in the Arctic.

In August the Danish government dismissed as "absurd" President Trump's suggestion of a US-Denmark land deal over Greenland.

Mr. Trump then cancelled a state visit to Denmark and called Danish Prime Minister Mette Frederiksen "nasty".

The US interest in Greenland goes back decades. The US has a key Cold War-era air base at Thule, used for surveillance of space using a massive radar. It is the US military's northernmost base, there to provide early warning of a missile attack on North America.

### Current & Relevant Information:

#### **Why the new focus on Greenland?**



Greenland's strategic importance has grown amid increased Arctic shipping and international competition for rare minerals. Arctic waters are becoming more navigable because of melting ice, linked to global warming.

The vast island is strategically located between North America and Europe, easing deliveries to many markets.

In a statement to the BBC, the FE's Lars Findsen said: "We have decided to start this year's Intelligence Risk Assessment with a chapter on the Arctic, as the interests of the great powers in the Arctic have direct impact on and growing significance for the Kingdom of Denmark.

"Despite the Arctic nations' shared ambition to keep the region free of security policy disagreements, the military focus on the Arctic is growing. A power game is unfolding between great powers Russia, the United States and China that deepens tensions in the region."

Russia has stepped up its economic and military activities in the Arctic. There are competing territorial claims at the UN from Denmark, Russia, the US and Canada in the North Pole region, where energy and mineral resources are becoming more accessible.

Kasper Wester, a defense journalist with Danish news website OLFI, says Denmark's military routinely patrols Greenland's airspace and waters.

However, in August Denmark sent a large support ship to Greenlandic waters for the first time. The Absalon, and sister ship Esbern Snare, are the biggest Danish naval vessels.

### **What are Danish-Greenland relations like now?**

Greenland's population is about 56,000 and for decades the territory has been economically dependent on Denmark.

The Self-Rule Act of 2009 granted Greenland far-reaching autonomy, though Denmark retains control over foreign affairs, defense, security and immigration.

Fisheries account for more than 90% of Greenland's exports, most of which go to Denmark, and prawn is the main species caught.

Denmark is helping Greenland to build three big international airports, one of them in the capital Nuuk. A Chinese bid for the airport project was rejected.

The government in Copenhagen gives Greenland an annual block grant of 3.9bn Danish kroner (£445m; \$574m).

Speaking to the BBC, journalist Kasper Wester said "for Greenland's people there is huge potential income in exporting minerals, and the whole independence discussion relates to that".



Some Greenlandic politicians were pushing for independence, he said, but most of them "know they would be much worse off without the Danish subsidy".

But he said there was still discussion about whether Danes were too colonial in their approach to Greenland.

"Danish politicians are very cautious about what's going on. Not many will say it's a good idea to do too much business with the Chinese," he added.

#### Social Issues:

**"Mental health at the heart of the climate crisis," Dan McDougall, The Guardian, 12 August 2019 [167] <https://www.theguardian.com/society/ng-interactive/2019/aug/12/life-on-thin-ice-mental-health-at-the-heart-of-the-climate-crisis>**

#### Overview:

Greenland's melting has been adopted by the world as its own problem. But for the islanders grieving their dissolving world, the crisis is personal, and dangerous.

#### Current & Relevant Information:

Away from global headlines about ice cap melt 80km inland from here, this is the frontline of climate change. In Greenland's working-class housing blocks single mums, fishermen, hotel cleaners, pensioners and hunters have their own fears for the future. Changing climate and the encroachment of the modern age has dramatically impacted the Inuit who live here in Ilulissat, and in other towns across the Arctic.

The next generation of Greenlanders face the biggest challenge in the island's arduous history. Released on Monday, a survey by the University of Copenhagen, the Kraks Fond Institute for Urban Economic Research and the University of Greenland reveals that climate crisis is having an untold psychological effect.

In what is broadly accepted as the first nationwide study on local reaction, the Greenlandic Perspectives Survey (GPS) reveals that 92% of residents think that climate change is happening, just 1% of residents do not. A further 76% of local people also claim to have personally experienced the effects – a damning figure.

The survey, covering an area almost three times the size of France and carried out by researchers from the universities of Greenland and Copenhagen, also destroyed a popular myth: that Greenlanders overwhelmingly believe they will benefit from a thaw. Instead, the majority believe it will harm its people, plants and animals. The survey teams travelled by plane, boat and helicopter to reach some of the most hostile and remote locations in the Arctic over the past few months, to map the increasing social anxiety and trauma in Greenland connected to the climate crisis.

**“Denmark helps Greenland solving social problems,” Heiner Kubny, Polar Journal, 24 August 2020 [168] <https://polarjournal.ch/en/2020/08/24/denmark-helps-greenland-solving-social-problems/>**

Overview:

The recognition that Greenland cannot solve the massive social challenges alone is important for Greenland and Greenlandic society. This is the opinion of the Minister for Social Affairs, Martha Abelsen. She also recognizes that Greenland may have made mistakes in dealing with social problems.

Current & Relevant Information:

"I believe that it is right for our country that we have asked Denmark for help with Greenland's social problems. I used to have concerns about asking for help, but now I can see that it is" the right thing, says Martha Abelsen during a press conference on August 21, 2020.

This is caused by alcoholism, a drug problem and violence against the weaker, as well as children.

"At the moment, we need outside help, and I am happy to take the outstretched hand. However, I must stress that it is important to remember that at some point in the future we will have to take care of social matters ourselves, without outside help. We have to prepare for that", she added.

"I've heard the most heartbreaking childhood stories of neglect, which we simply can't turn a blind eye to. We owe it to the vulnerable children of Greenland to bring about real change. I am therefore pleased that we are now taking a large number of initiatives that will help both now and in the long term. And even if we can't solve all the problems at once, it will help more people to a safer childhood. Danish Social Affairs Minister Astrid Krag.

The Danish Parliament has allocated 80 million Danish kroner (EUR 10.8 million) to support the implementation of the recommendations.

Danish Social Affairs Minister Astrid Krag points out during the press conference that Danish aid to Greenland does not mean that Denmark is copying its best practice examples to Greenland. Greenlandic solutions are needed for Greenlandic challenges, she stresses.

"We do not intend to transfer measures that work in Denmark to Greenland, as we have the experience that this does not necessarily work here. Of course, we must take Greenlandic society as a starting point if we have to find solutions. We work closely together to find solutions", says Astrid Krag, using Tasiilaq as an example.

Since last year, a working group of psychologists and clerks has been in Tasiilaq to deal with cases involving children and adolescents in the community system, while

treating them as victims of sexual abuse. At the same time, the district administration of the greater municipality of Sermersooq has sent more employees to Tasiilaq, so that both Denmark and Greenland work closely together to solve the problems.

Astrid Krag stresses that it is Greenland that must decide how Danish funding should be used. Denmark will continue to follow the action from the sidelines.

"It makes several recommendations in this area. But we can say that things have changed. We can feel that there is a will in society to change the conditions. We have acknowledged that there is a problem, but we do not accept sexual abuse", said Martha Abelsen.

**"The Prevalence of Suicide in Greenland," Riley Behlke, The Borgen Project, 22 February 2021 [169] <https://borgenproject.org/suicide-in-greenland/?nowprocket=1>**

#### Overview:

Between 1970 and 1980, the suicide rate in Greenland was seven times higher than that of the United States. The high incidences of suicide in Greenland stemmed from the devaluing of local Inuit culture which occurred when Denmark pushed to modernize the island. Due to a lack of adequate resources, improvements have been slow. However, as mental health has become destigmatized, various NGOs and government programs have appeared over the last decade with promising solutions to address suicide in Greenland.

#### Current & Relevant Information:

##### **Suicide in Greenland Today**

In 2016, the global average annual suicide rate was 16 persons per 100,000. In Greenland, the annual suicide rate was 82 persons per 100,000.

Suicide is not evenly distributed across Greenland's population. Teenagers and young adults are at the highest risk of suicide. According to the Nordic Centre of Welfare and Social Issues, the prevalence of suicide in Greenland is three times higher among 20 to 24-year-olds than 25 to 65-year-olds. Additionally, 23% of teenagers and young adults reported that they have self-harmed.

##### **Recognizing Risk Factors**

Due to the rapid modernization of the 1970s and 1980s, many people emigrated to the cities and larger settlements for economic and educational mobility. However, once there, they needed to assimilate to appear more Danish. The loss of identity that followed saw communities turn to alcohol, which in turn led to child abuse and neglect — two major risk factors for suicide. This erosion of family structure made it hard for individuals to cope with emotional and psychological hardships.

**"Future independence, Arctic minister and social issues on the agenda as Greenland goes to polls in Danish elections," Ragnhild Gronning, High North**

**News, 3 June 2019 [170]** <https://www.hignorthnews.com/en/future-independence-arctic-minister-and-social-issues-agenda-greenland-goes-polls-danish-elections>

Overview:

Despite the relatively low interest in the Danish Folketing election in Greenland, the results can potentially have implications for the direction of the future relationship between Greenland and Denmark.

Current & Relevant Information:

On June 5, Denmark will elect 179 members for its national parliament – Folketinget – two of which are from Greenland. The future relationship between Greenland and Denmark has been a central topic of the past few weeks' election campaigns in Greenland.

“With Greenland becoming more autonomous, and having both its own Greenlandic parliament as well as representatives in the Danish parliament, there is naturally less interest in the Danish elections than in those for the Greenlandic national parliament”, says Ebbe Volquardsen, who is an Assistant Professor of Cultural History and Head of the Department of Cultural and Social History at the University of Greenland in Nuuk.

50,4 per cent of eligible Greenlandic citizens voted in the Danish election in 2015, while 72 per cent voted in the election for the Greenlandic parliament Inatsisartut in 2018.

**Sexual abuse and suicide prevention on the agenda**

Social issues, in particular sexual abuse against children and the lack of action from the Greenlandic government and local authorities has been one of the most important topics in the current election campaign in Greenland.

The issue has been brought to the surface through a documentary by the Danish TV channel DR called “The city where children disappear” (Byen hvor børn forsvinder). In the city Tasiilaq in South-Eastern Greenland, one out of five dies of suicide. This is often connected to sexual abuse in the childhood, and the documentary shows that most of the victims have not received sufficient or any help from social services.

The documentary, Volquardsen says, has changed the agenda of election campaigns considerably. Calls for immediate action by the political competitors have led the Greenlandic opposition to accuse the government of being too proud to ask the Danish authorities for assistance on this matter, without specifying how such assistance could look like.

**“Indigenous peoples in Greenland,” International Work Group for Indigenous Affairs, 28 March 2011 [171]** <https://www.iwgia.org/en/kalaallit-nunaat->

[greenland.html#:~:text=The%20Indigenous%20Peoples%20of%20Greenland,majority%20of%20the%20Greenlandic%20population.](#)

#### Overview:

The indigenous peoples of Greenland are Inuit and make up a majority of the Greenlandic population. Greenland is a self-governing country within the Danish Realm, and although Denmark has adopted the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, Greenland's population continue to face challenges.

#### Current & Relevant Information:

##### **Social issues**

Social affairs have always been the responsibility of the Greenland Home Rule authorities. The social system is, to a large extent, a replica of the Danish welfare system, which includes social security, free access to medical treatment, maternity leave, old-age pension, etc. However, despite the fact that the Greenland economy does not allow for social benefits on a par with those enjoyed in Denmark, only comparatively few choose to move to Denmark for this reason.

It might seem paradoxical that, in spite of the welfare system, Greenland society suffers from a number of serious social problems. Alcohol abuse is maybe the most serious, and every year it is the cause of a high number of accidents, violent behavior and family tragedies. Many children and young people are neglected for this reason and have to be placed in care outside their families. During the debate on self-government or independence, some politicians have mentioned the danger of specifically forgetting this issue in the political debate. The political discussion on self-government vs. independence is often led by men whereas social issues are promoted by women. In light of what seems to be the main concern of the general public, it is perhaps not surprising that women were so successful in the last elections for the Greenland Parliament.

Greenland society also suffers from an exceedingly high suicide rate, not least among young adults. Finally, it should be mentioned that drug abuse is an increasing problem. The press, not least in Denmark, often portray Greenland as a country dominated by social problems. Although social problems such as those mentioned are serious, it is still important to remember that Greenland offers its people a number of social benefits unknowns to indigenous peoples in the poor countries of Africa, Asia and Latin America.

**“The Danish Illusion: The Gap Between Principle and Practice in the Danish Welfare System,” Alexander Lu and Lisa Sig Olesen, Humanity in Action [172]**  
[https://www.humanityinaction.org/knowledge\\_detail/the-danish-illusion-the-gap-between-principle-and-practice-in-the-danish-welfare-system/](https://www.humanityinaction.org/knowledge_detail/the-danish-illusion-the-gap-between-principle-and-practice-in-the-danish-welfare-system/)

#### Overview:

Growing social problems may be on the horizon for the “world’s happiest country”. Although Denmark’s welfare model seems on paper to provide a sufficient safety net for its citizens, in practice, conditions today threaten to reveal the celebrated welfare state as having effectively been a mere illusion. The official website for Denmark describes its national welfare model as a system which aspires to make this the sort of country described by writer N.F.S. Grundtvig: a country in which “few have too much and fewer too little.” Denmark continues to serve as an admirable model of an effective welfare state; however, its welfare system is undergoing substantial and fundamental changes that have yet to be adequately addressed. Although Danish society claims to uphold the basic principles of a welfare state – solidarity among citizens and provisions for the needy – in practice, public discourse and government policies have been creating a more libertarian, individualistic model that strays from its founding principles. Until the Danish people stop moralizing about solidarity and acknowledge the changing nature of their welfare system, Denmark’s poor and excluded will grow in number to fill this dangerously widening gap between perception and practice.

#### Current & Relevant Information:

#### **Social Solidarity? Straying from the ideals of the welfare state**

The Danish welfare system is ostensibly grounded in the principle of solidarity among citizens. Traditionally, its underlying philosophy has been the socialistic ideal that the state has the responsibility to secure for everyone “the necessary material framework for living a reasonable life,” in the words of Denmark’s official website. In recent years, by the Danish people’s own admission, the country’s model has fallen short of this goal. A 2008 article in *Jyllandsposten* reported that a poll conducted by Ugebrevet A4 shows 59% of those polled to believe that the economic gap between rich and poor needs to be reduced. In the words of Per Shulz Jørgensen, leader of the Alternative Welfare Commission: “the welfare society is not living up to its own principles—inequality has increased, poverty has returned.” Poverty in Denmark has increased, and threatens to continue rising in the coming years if current trends remain unchanged. As Karin Larsen, department leader at Kofoed’s School, told us in reference to the failures of the current welfare system: “you’d have to be blind and deaf in Denmark if you don’t know about it.” Indeed, there seems to be a common consensus that homelessness and poverty are growing problems, relative to other years under the Danish welfare state.

There are several indications that poverty in Denmark is rising. According to a 2009 article published by the online newspaper *Avisen.dk*, from 2001 to 2006 the number of poor increased by 55,000. Why is poverty rising in a country with a welfare system that purports to ensure that “all citizens have equal rights to social security”? A study of the discourse and practices surrounding that system suggests that Danish society has effectively abandoned—in practice if not yet in mind—the ideals underlying the original conception for the Danish Model. Although people may insist

that solidarity is still the main driving principle behind the welfare system in Denmark, the reality that confronts the country today suggests otherwise. Current welfare policies amount to a substantively new type of system, which operates on different principles than Danish society seems ready to admit. Dr. Preben Brandt, founder and director of Project Outside and author of the recent book, *The City and Social Inequality*, characterizes the problem as “a schism between what you would like to show and what you really are.” “People still feel they want more solidarity in the system but they are acting differently,” says Brandt. This gap between principle and practice threatens to systematically neglect a growing population of needy and excluded persons in Denmark.

### C. Finland:

“Finland,” Arctic Council [173] <https://arctic-council.org/en/about/states/finland/>

#### Overview:

#### **Quick Facts**

##### **Arctic Territory**

Northern Ostrobothnia, Kainuu and Lapland

##### **Arctic Population**

180,000 (Lapland), 5,500,000 (Finland)

##### **Arctic Indigenous Peoples**

Saami

#### Current & Relevant Information:

##### **Finland and the Arctic Region**

While Finland’s Strategy for the Arctic Region 2013 defines the entire country as Arctic, nearly one-third of the country’s land mass lies above the Arctic Circle in the province of Lapland. Despite its vast size, Lapland is sparsely populated with just under 180,000 inhabitants, while Finland’s total population exceeds 5,500,000.

Finland has contributed expertise and modern technology to industries such as Arctic construction, Arctic environmental technology and the development of Arctic infrastructure, transportation and navigation in ice-covered waters. It also houses various Arctic research and educational programs and institutions. Several biological research stations are located in Lapland, where Arctic ecology is studied. The Arctic Centre, an institute affiliated to the University of Lapland in Rovaniemi, carries out interdisciplinary research on the effects of global changes and on the natural balance of Arctic nature and Arctic societies. The University of Oulu has a research focus on Arctic medical sciences. Arctic-related issues are also included in teaching and research programs of many other higher education institutions in Finland.



## Indigenous Peoples

The Saami are an Indigenous people who live in Sápmi, an area that stretches across the northern parts of Norway, Sweden, Finland and Russia. The Saami population is estimated between 50,000 and 80,000, with approximately 10,500 located in Finland. The preservation of the Saami's languages and culture is governed by an autonomous Saami parliament in Inari, Finland.

**“Finland,” The Arctic Institute Center for Circumpolar Security Studies, 1 August 2022 [174] <https://www.thearcticinstitute.org/countries/finland/>**

### Overview:

The area defined as Northern Finland covers three provinces that together form 44% of Finland: Northern Ostrobothnia (Pohjois-Pohjanmaa), Kainuu, and Lapland (Lappi). When talking about the Finnish Arctic, the area most commonly referred to is Lapland as the Arctic Circle crosses the province at approximately the same latitude as its capital, Rovaniemi. This puts one third of Finland's territory above the Arctic Circle. The total area of the three provinces of Northern Finland is 160,851 km<sup>2</sup>, of which Lapland covers 98,983 km<sup>2</sup>. Despite being the largest province in terms of territory, Lapland remains sparsely populated with only 180 thousand people. These people are spread across Lapland's 21 municipalities which, in turn, form six sub-regions. The Sámi Homeland in Lapland is legally defined and includes the municipalities of Enontekiö, Inari and Utsjoki and the northern part of Sodankylä.

Lapland has a typical subarctic climate with cold, snowy winters and reasonably mild summers. The average temperatures range from -13.5 °C to 14.5 °C whereas during the winter months temperatures can dip below -30 °C. The record low -51.5°C was measured in Kittilä in 1999. Lapland's nature and scenery is dominated by fells, forests and waterways. There are several fells in Lapland, with the most well-known being Halti, Saana, and Korvatunturi. About 30% of the land in Lapland is either national parks or other nature conservation areas. Around 90% of the Sámi homeland area is government controlled and 80% falls within nature conservation areas. These areas are important for traditional reindeer husbandry and tourism.

Finnish Lapland has been upheld as an example of how ecosystem services can help prevent ecological problems caused by human action, as well as a way to resolve land-use questions in an economically and environmentally sustainable way. Finland has attempted to position itself as a leader in sustainable development in the Arctic region. Moreover, Finland is often rated among the world's top countries in terms of environmental protection standards. In spite of these impressive achievements, Finland's ecological footprint is still quite high when compared to its Nordic neighbors.

With over 70% of the country covered, Finland is Europe's most forested country. Of these forests, about 17,000 km<sup>2</sup> of it are strictly protected. Finland's forest resources



are increasing as the natural growth of forests more than compensates for the amounts of timber logged. Finland's contributions to global greenhouse gas emissions are small in global terms, but very high when measured per capita. Renewable energy sources account for about a quarter of all the energy used in Finland. A large part of this renewable energy is produced from residuals generated in the pulp and paper industry, including bio-sludge and wood chips. Almost half of the wood used in Finland is burnt to produce energy.

The [Regional Council of Lapland](#) has developed a climate change strategy for 2030. The strategy lists goals for Lapland in order to better mitigate climate change in the region. Lapland's carbon dioxide emissions in 2009 were about 2.8 million tons, which is more than the Finnish average in proportion to population density. The province of Lapland sees climate change as bringing both economic opportunities for development, but also as a threat to traditional livelihoods.

The [Finnish Environment Institute](#) (SYKE) is represented in the Arctic Council's [Arctic Monitoring and Assessment Program](#) (AMAP) studying contaminants in lake sediments and the movements of harmful airborne substances. SYKE also takes part in the Arctic Contaminants Action Plan (ACAP). The Centre for Economic Development, Transport and Environment (ELY Centre) in Lapland also takes part in AMAP and other international environmental management initiatives.

#### Current & Relevant Information:

Helsinki, Finland's capital and largest city, has a population of 648,650. The entire Helsinki region counts approximately 1.5 million inhabitants. Most of the largest cities in Finland, including Helsinki, are located in the south. These include Espoo (281,886) and Tampere (234,441). The biggest cities in Northern Finland are Oulu (202,753), Rovaniemi (62,667), Kajaani (37,039), and Tornio (21,912). As of 2014, 181,815 people lived in Lapland.

The majority of Arctic residents in Finland speak Finnish, with 1,560 speaking Sami, 438 speaking Swedish, and 3,467 speaking some other language as their mother tongue. Much of the current population of Finland's Arctic predates the country's modern independence to its time as part of the Swedish Empire (~1249-1809). Many Finns and Swedes moved to Lapland to build villages around isolated dwellings in the wilderness, both claiming land and cultivating parcels. These settlers sought to capitalize on the wilderness and its hunting and agricultural potential. Eventually, new industries like forestry and mining drew southerners to the Arctic for economic gain.

There are approximately 10 thousand Sámi living in Finland. Only about 35 percent live in or near their original Sámi homelands, and those that do live in Lapland compose only 5 percent of the population. This represents a challenge to the Sámi community and culture. Other major challenges facing the Sámi in Finland are

maintaining the Sámi language, the limited health and social services available in their remote communities, as well as problems of social exclusion.

The Sámi in Finland are represented by the [Sámi Parliament](#) established in 1995 as an independent legal entity subject to public law with its own governing body. There are 21 elected representatives and 4 deputies in the Sámi Parliament who are elected every 4 years. The Sámi Parliament can make initiatives, proposals and statements representing the official view of the Sámi in Finland on issues concerning them in both national and international contexts.

The Finnish Constitution was amended to include stronger rights for the Sámi in 1995. The amendments recognized the status of the Sámi as an Indigenous people and gave the Sámi additional rights to maintain and develop their languages and culture. The new legislation guaranteed that Sámi language and culture in their Homeland would be managed by the Sámi and not the Finnish government. The Finnish authorities thus have to consult with the Sámi Parliament in all matters affecting the status of Sámi as an Indigenous people.

In Finland, the definition of a Sámi is laid down in the *Act on the Sámi Parliament* and is mainly based on the Sámi language. According to this official definition, a Sámi is a person who considers him- or herself a Sámi, has learnt Sámi as his or her first language, or has at least one parent or grandparent whose first language is Sámi. There have been some issues with the definition lately as the Supreme Administrative Court of Finland still has the right to define the Sámi status. The Sámi Parliament considers this a violation of their rights to define their own identity and community membership. Finland has still not ratified the International Labour Organization's Convention 169—a binding UN document dealing specifically with Indigenous rights.

The Sámi culture has maintained its traditional elements but faces challenges today as people become integrated with global industries, growing tourism, and technological development. To adapt to the changing economic opportunities of Finland's North while keeping indigenous traditions alive, the two major occupations in the Sámi Homeland are tourism and reindeer husbandry. The Sámi Parliament advocates and works together with the municipalities to revive and maintain the Sámi language and education. All the middle schools and high schools within the Sámi Homelands are legally obligated to offer education also in the Sámi languages; North Sámi, Skolt Sámi and Inari Sámi.

The Sámi of Finland, [Norway](#), [Russia](#) and [Sweden](#) are represented in the Arctic Council by the [Saami Council](#), a non-governmental organization founded in 1956. The Saami Council actively deals with policy-related tasks advocating the Saami rights and interests in the four countries as well as to an international audience.

**“Finland will put climate first in its next Arctic policy,” Kevin McGwin, Arctic Today, 6 March 2020 [175] <https://www.arctictoday.com/finland-will-put-climate-first-in-its-next-arctic-policy/>**

Overview:

Finland has said that the next iteration of its Arctic policy will take a long-term perspective on the region by pushing for economic development that does not capitalize on the effects of global warming, strengthening the Arctic Council and other institutions and linking its strategy for the region to its national goal of becoming carbon-free by 2035.

“In line with the government program, all activity in the Arctic region must be tied in with the carrying capacity of the environment, the need to protect the climate, the importance of sustainable development principles, and respect for the rights of indigenous peoples,” a government statement issued last week said.

Finland’s current policy was drawn up in 2013 and updated three years later. The process of drawing up a new version, which is expected to take about a year, officially began last month during events in Helsinki and Rovaniemi titled Globally Influential Finland in the Arctic Region.

Current & Relevant Information:

A glimpse of the direction the strategy is likely to take was seen earlier this year, when Prime Minister Sanna Marin laid out her views on the effects of global warming in the region during a session of the annual meeting of the World Economic Forum, where she talked up the Arctic Council and described any prosperity gains from oil drilling as short sighted.

“The Arctic issue is so much more than a geopolitical issue or an issue of geopolitical contest or competition or tension. It’s about climate, it’s about our future, and that’s why we need to tackle climate change if want to save the Arctic and also tackle the risks [related to] the geopolitical issues,” she said.

Those involved in the process expect the outcome will be a “narrow” but “far-reaching” policy that pushes cooperation among the Arctic countries, a stronger role for the Arctic Council and the Arctic Economic Council and greater EU involvement in the region.

Finland’s revision is taking place as the four other Nordic countries — Denmark, Norway, Sweden and Iceland — are preparing new Arctic strategies of their own, and all five, say diplomats, have spoken with each other “where relevant and appropriate” — particularly in areas like security policy — in an effort to iron out major differences amongst the policies.

**“Finland's Arctic and Antarctic cooperation,” Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland [176] <https://um.fi/arctic-cooperation>**

### Overview:

Finland is an active Polar actor. We are one of eight permanent members of the Arctic Council and one of 29 consultative parties making decisions concerning Antarctica.

The Arctic is still one of the purest and most pristine regions in the world. However, today it is also facing rapid and partly controversial changes. Climate change and its impacts and repercussions, both regionally and globally, logistics opportunities that open up as the ice is melting, pandemics and the natural resources of the Arctic have made the region increasingly interesting, but also more vulnerable on the international arena.

As also stated in Prime Minister Sanna Marin's Government Program, the key premises of Finland's Arctic cooperation are the carrying capacity of the natural environment, climate protection, and respect for the sustainable development principles and rights of indigenous populations. According to the Government Program, Finland will also be an active player in strengthening the Arctic policy of the EU.

The Strategy for the Arctic Region, adopted in 2013 and updated in 2016, specifies the objectives and means of Finland's Arctic policy. Now the Arctic policy strategy is being revised on the basis of the current Government Program.

### Current & Relevant Information:

#### **Finland's foreign and EU policy on the Arctic**

Finland's foreign and EU policy on the Arctic builds on cooperation in the EU, the Arctic Council and the Barents Euro-Arctic Council, and in the context of the Northern Dimension Partnerships. Nordic cooperation strengthens Finland's Arctic role.

Environmental cooperation and respect for the interests of indigenous populations are important elements of Finland's Arctic foreign and EU policy.

### Social Issues:

**“Finland in the Face of Change: A Report on Finland's Challenges,” Antti Hautamaki, Sitra Reports [177] <https://media.sitra.fi/2017/02/28141952/raportti19-2.pdf>**

### Summary:

The basic message of the report is that the success of a society does not depend solely on economic fundamentals but also on social capital – cooperation and trust. As society is becoming increasingly individualistic and pluralistic, the future of social capital is all but certain. While Finnish society is more affluent and competitive than ever before, social problems are mounting and the people are not faring too well.

People are also worried that society will divide into the haves and have-nots. The big issue is what will happen to social capital. The significance of this issue is amplified by the interdependency of the welfare state and social capital. The former may both strengthen and weaken the latter, while weak social capital will degrade the popularity of the welfare state. This report is based on the theory of modernization, according to which the existing complex society is the result of a process of differentiation. As the significance of traditions weakens and pluralism gains more ground, modern society matures into late-modern. Changes in the economic environment will be discussed against this backdrop of modernization. Topics will include globalization, new technologies and the new economy, social risks and social capital. The latter two have in fact received much too little attention in public debate.

The theory of modernization and the changes occurring in the economic operating environment offer a rewarding approach to the Finnish situation. Finland boasts excellent competitiveness which can be further improved with information technology. Nevertheless, Finland is troubled by major structural social problems, including ageing, unemployment, regional development and the transformation of family structure.

In the following I will identify and analyze the ailments of the welfare state. I will pay special attention to social cohesion, as seen through the role of NGOs and the widening incomes gap. New phenomena in working life and their impact on families will also be discussed. Finally, I will take a look at the changes taking place in the values and attitudes of the Finns.

From the viewpoint of its members, it is foremost task of society to promote a good life. In fulfilling this task, it should recognize that people are different and that they have responsibility for their own lives. The report will end with an overview of one of the most difficult problems faced by Finland, namely regional development. Central to solving this problem is the reinforcement of local initiative and creation of well-functioning connections with the centers. In the conclusions I will summarize the report and highlight the themes to which we in Finland – and at Sitra – should give more attention.

#### Current & Relevant Information:

Finland has weathered the recession and all indices show that its competitiveness is among the highest in the world. At the same time, structural problems of its society have escalated. The population is ageing rapidly, bringing about a complex skein of problems. Unemployment is decreasing at a surprisingly low rate, and the number of long-term unemployed is nearly 100,000. Internal migration has increased, and the majority of the population is gravitating towards four or five growth centers. Divorces are on the increase and many people are living alone.

Four of the structural problems of Finnish society are discussed in this report: ageing, unemployment, regional centralization, and changes in family types.

**“Top 10 Facts About Poverty in Finland: Issues & Solutions,” Jessica Reyes, The Borgen Project, 25 July 2018 [178] <https://borgenproject.org/top-10-facts-about-poverty-in-finland/?nowprocket=1>**

#### Overview:

Today, Finland has a reputation for one of the lowest poverty rates in the world, and thousands of Finns live below the poverty level. These top 10 facts about poverty in Finland will help put into perspective the socio-economic issues Finland faces today.

#### Current & Relevant Information:

##### **Facts About Poverty in Finland**

1. Finland's poverty rate is 5.8 percent, based on a 50 percent threshold of the average income from the OECD's most recent report. In recent years, the at-risk-of-poverty percentage hit its peak in 2008 at 13.9 percent but dropped to 11.7 percent by 2015. Finland's low poverty rate is right behind Denmark's and not too far from the other Nordic countries.
2. In 2016, the National Institute for Health and Welfare (THL) reported approximately 400,000 people — or 8 percent — of the Finnish population live underneath Finland's minimum budget of 669 euros.
3. Finland's welfare system is based on the Nordic model, which emphasizes socio-economic equality. In turn, Finland strives to maintain a financial safety net for its citizens and reduce poverty. Politicians such as Bernie Sanders have used the Nordic model as an example to propose solutions to inequality in the U.S.
4. Finns hold an unusually high amount of trust in each other, and tend to be more willing to pay high taxes needed for the nation's welfare system. According to a recent Eurobarometer study, more than 80 percent of Finns say that they trust other Finns; this percentage is higher than in any other country in Europe.
5. As of 2014, the child poverty rate in Finland was 3.6 percent. Child poverty tends to be lower in countries that spend a high percentage of their GDP on social programs, so Nordic countries including Finland possess some low poverty rates.
6. The shortage of affordable housing ails low-income people and the homeless. One of the largest contributing factors to poverty in Finland is expensive housing costs, especially in urban areas. However, programs like Housing First help ensure that Finns have someplace to live, even at their lowest, most desperate moments. The program is funded by the government and has housed previously homeless Finns for extended periods of time.

7. Low-income individuals and families have trouble accessing proper social and health services because of growing customer fees. Finland spends 8.6 percent of its GDP on healthcare, which is below the OECD average of 8.9 percent.

8. In recent years, the number of unemployed immigrants has reached between 2 to 5 times more than that of the average Finn. As a result, more than 50 percent of immigrant households in Finland live in poverty. To combat immigrant unemployment rates, the European Investment Fund recently allotted 10 million euros for an experiment by the Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment that aims to provide skilled labor jobs for 2,500 unemployed immigrants.

9. In January 2017, Finland became one of the first countries to start a universal basic income (UBI) experiment. Each month, they gave a stipend of approximately \$680 to 2,000 unemployed people living below the poverty level. In theory, the experiment poses a potential solution to eliminating poverty within the country by providing enough money for each citizen to live frugally — regardless of social class. The experiment is set to end in December 2018, and the results of the experiment have not yet been released.

10. In line with the Europe 2020 Strategy, Finland aims to lower the number of people living in poverty or social exclusion to 770,000 by 2020. According to Statistics Finland, currently 849,000 people live in poverty or social exclusion.

**“Mental Health Among Youth in Finland,” Matilda Wrede-Jantti, Nordic Centre for Welfare and Social Issues, October 2017 [179] [https://nordicwelfare.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/10/finland\\_webb-1.pdf](https://nordicwelfare.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/10/finland_webb-1.pdf)**

#### Overview:

The population of Finland, as of 2014, is roughly 5.5 million, and has an even gender distribution. 28.2% of the population are under 25 and 34.4% are under 30. Average life expectancy in Finland is 83.4 years for women and 77.5 for men. In the past 20 years, the difference in life expectancy between men and women has decreased by two years, but there is still nearly six years difference.

Finland is divided into 320 municipalities, of which only twenty have more than 50,000 inhabitants and 139 have a population of less than 5000. Approximately 1.1 million people live in the Helsinki region.

The views of young people and people of working age on their own health status have been constant in recent years. Among young people, one-fifth rate their health as moderate or good, and the figure is one-third for people of working age. Self-rated health in Finland is worse than that in other Nordic countries (THL 2014).

#### Current & Relevant Information:

#### **Need for mental healthcare services**



In 2013, there were 2.4 million visits to the mental health care outpatient units. Twenty-five percent of the visits were referred via the primary health service, and 90% of these were handled by professional groups such as nurses or psychologists rather than doctors. Institutional care comprised approximately 1.4 million care days in 2013. At the institutions, nearly 38 000 patients were admitted with a diagnosis of mental ill health. Both the number of care days and patients are falling.

### **Substance abuse**

Substance abuse and ill health are closely linked, and drinking alcohol is ranked as one of top five risk factors for disease, disability and death (WHO, 2011). In Finland, people drink more than people in other Nordic countries, with a total of 11.6 liters of pure alcohol per person aged 15 and older. Experimental use of drugs has increased, particularly in the 25-34 age group (NAD 2015).

### **Suicide and self-harm**

Suicide is a significant cause of death among young people in Finland. One-tenth of suicide deaths in Finland involve young people under 25 and one-third of all deaths in the 15-24 age group are the result of suicide. In 2013, a total of 887 people, or 16.3 people in every 100,000, committed suicide, a slightly higher figure than the year before. Of these, 11% were under 25. Forty per cent of suicide attempts in Finland are made in an intoxicated state and three-quarters of people committing suicide in Finland are men, although the number of suicides has fallen for both men and women by over 15% in the past ten years. The figure was highest in 1990, when over 1500 people committed suicide in Finland. According to Eurostat's statistics from 2011, only Latvia and Lithuania have a higher suicide rate for young people than Finland. However (Findicator 2014).

When broken down by gender, girls are known to attempt suicide more often than boys, but boys are more likely to commit suicide. In 2010-2012, the suicide rate for boys aged 15-24 was 28 cases in 100,000 people, while the rate for girls was 9 cases in 100,000. Girls are more likely to engage in self-harming behavior that results in hospitalization than boys. The incidence of girls aged 20-24 being admitted to hospital as a result of self-harming behavior rose dramatically from just over 100 cases per 100,000 in 2005 to more than 160 cases per 100,000 in 2008. The incidence of boys aged 20-24 being admitted to hospital as a result of self-harming behavior also rose but substantially, but from less than 80 cases per 100,000 in 2005 to approximately 125 cases per 100,000 in 2008.

The most common warning signs for suicide tendencies are previous attempts or explicit suicidal thoughts. Other forms of self-harming behavior, such as cutting, also comprise risk factors. A clear majority of young people who commit or attempt suicide have suffered from mental ill-health, and over half have suffered from depression. However, it is noteworthy that an association can be established between a young person's self-harm behavior and the parents' socioeconomic



status, receipt of social benefits, and civil status. Not surprisingly, self-harm behavior is more common among children whose parents have a low income, lower socioeconomic status, and higher dependency on benefits, and among single parents.

### **Child welfare**

Studies show that people who experienced difficulties in childhood also tend to face more challenges later in life (e.g., Kestilä 2012; Törrönen & Vauhkonen 2012). In 2012, child and adolescent care services worked with approximately 87,000 children and young people. Approximately 104,000 cases were reported to the social services, of which 65,000 concerned children. In the same year, more than 17,800 children and young people were placed outside the home, which is approximately 1.4% of the under-18 age group. Approximately 4000 children and young people were taken into emergency care.

In 2013 approximately 89,000 children and young people were the subject of community-based child welfare interventions. This is two per cent more than the previous year, although the increase can be partly explained by the new Child Welfare Act of 2008, which lowered the threshold for child welfare notifications and reflects the aim to offer support at an earlier stage 18,000 children and young people were placed outside the home, an increase of 0.9% on the previous year. Even though the total number of children in care remained at the same level as the previous year, there was a 6.6 % increase in the number of emergency placements on the year before. Consequently, a total of 4200 children were the subject of emergency placement in 2013. Among them, 2765 (65%) were placed outside the home for the first time in their lives. Of all children and young people placed outside the home, 39% were in residential care, 37% in foster care and 13% in professional family homes. The remaining 11% were in other types of care. The gender distribution is even, with 52% of the children and young people placed outside the home being male (THL 2014b).

The number of young people in the older age groups, 13-15 and 16-17, placed outside the home is very high. During a year, 1% of the population aged 1-17 is placed outside the home, but in the 16-17 age group, the figure is three times higher (THL 2014b).

### **Unemployment and social benefits**

According to the Statistics Finland Labour Force Survey, the unemployment rate in July 2015 was 8.4 percent (men 8.7%, women 8.2%), which is 1.4 percentage points higher than one year earlier. Of the 644,000 young people aged 15-24, 314,000 were employed and 66,000 unemployed. The unemployment rate for young people aged 15 to 24, was 17.4 percent, which corresponds to 10.2 percent of all young people aged 15 to 24 in the population (Statistics Finland 2015c).

An estimated 7% of the population received social benefits in 2013, an increase of 2.9% compared with the previous year. Spread over the entire population, social benefits comprised EUR 135 per person in 2013. In 2012, Finland paid out EUR 60 billion in social benefits, an increase of 3% compared with the preceding year, and an average of EUR 11,086/person. The largest cost item comprised services directed towards older people, particularly pensions (36.7%). The second biggest cost item was costs relating to sickness and health (24.7%), which together comprised EUR 14.8 billion.

**“Private sector can help Finland solve health and social services problems,”**

**Terhi Ollikainen, Aalto University, 1 July 2021 [180]**

<https://www.aalto.fi/en/news/private-sector-can-help-finland-solve-health-and-social-services-problems>

Overview:

‘The rise in social welfare and health care expenditures must be brought under control. The problem is that they have been rising faster than GDP for years now already. Economic growth has finally sped up again in recent years, so the problem in relation to GDP has not been the same as before, but if GDP growth slows down again, the problem will continue,’ says Teemu Malmi, Professor of Accounting at Aalto University School of Business. He has studied business and the opportunities and limitations it presents in relation to the social welfare and health care sector.

Current & Relevant Information:

According to Professor Malmi, the problem does not go away even if GDP increases. This is due to the ageing of our population. As the population ages, the share of carers increases while the number of taxpayers decreases – in other words, the dependency ratio gets worse. At the same time, medicine and health technology are rapidly developing. This means individual treatment is getting easier and better, which means there are opportunities to provide better treatment. These treatments, of course, will probably cost more than the previous ones.

‘This means that in this welfare society, the question arises as to who will tell the people that even though a better treatment exists, it is not available to them. These types of prioritization discussions have been poorly handled in Finland. There will also be a shortage of labor in the health and social services sector, which will push costs upwards. It is easy to say at the board level that we will hire more doctors, but the reality is that even at the moment not all vacant posts can be filled,’ Professor Malmi explains.

Could the problem be solved by the private sector taking on the running of some social welfare and health care services?

‘Private sector actors have an intrinsic motivation for operating efficiently because they have to make profits. We have many municipalities that have outsourced social

welfare and health care services and achieved lower costs and greater service availability as a result. There is also evidence that private sector organizations can provide services at a lower cost. Of course, there have also been problems in the care of the elderly, so the activities of private companies in the health and social services sector should of course be monitored and regulated,' Professor Malmi continues.

**“Social Innovation in Finland,” Fiona Pronay, [essi-net.eu \[181\]](https://www.essi-net.eu/wp-content/uploads/2021/07/Social-Innovation-in-Finland-2011.pdf) <https://www.essi-net.eu/wp-content/uploads/2021/07/Social-Innovation-in-Finland-2011.pdf>**

#### Overview:

The definition of social innovation still has to continue to evolve in Finland. Hämäläinen (2011) makes the point that “definitions and the field of action are in constant flux as the challenges of society change, so it is impossible to give one concise interpretation.” One definition that has been used in the context of social innovation in Finland is Zapf’s (1989) interpretation: “Social innovation can be defined as new ways of reaching specific goals and they include new organization forms, new regulations as well as new life styles that solve problems better than traditional practices do and that are worth imitating and/or institutionalizing. Innovations have to change the direction of social development”. Other definitions in the field of innovation emphasize rather the technical dimension but not the social dimension.

#### Current & Relevant Information:

The most significant achievement and strength of Finland’s society is its free general education, small income disparities, little poverty and the wide participation of women in working life (Sitra 2005, 6). According to Tekes, the Finnish Funding Agency for Technology and Innovation, are Finnish companies and scientists precursors in various fields of technology and innovation. The focus is predominantly on forest, chemical and metal industries, ICT, new materials, environmental technologies, functional food, and biotechnology and diagnostics. Technological development and technological innovations are generally considered the strongest area of Finnish innovation. As yet Finland has no clear development strategy for social innovation (cf. Science and Technology Policy Council of Finland, 13) Therefore, the area of social innovation will have to continue to evolve in order to improve the quality of life and the performance of society. Problems Finland is faced with and which have to be tackled in the future are: unemployed, demographic ageing & labor shortage (Sitra 2005, 6). A part of unemployment and also high youth unemployment is structural and coexists with a labor shortage. Further issues are the health and care sector and the viability of the rural areas and failing communities (Bland 2010).

In the health and care sector social innovation has already begun to make progress but will still be an issue in the future. Even though there is yet to be an actual

breakthrough according to Hämäläinen (2011) regarding social innovations in Finland there are examples of social innovations in the past.

**“Charitable food aid in Finland: from a social issue to an environmental solution,”**

**Ville Tikka, Agriculture and Human Values, 2019 [182]**

<https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s10460-019-09916-3>

#### Abstract:

Since the establishment of the first food bank in 1995, charitable food aid (CFA) has become entrenched in Finland as a seemingly irreplaceable solution to food poverty. Further, it has recently been suggested that the focus of food aid activities is shifting from food poverty and temporary hunger alleviation towards environmental sustainability through addressing food waste via organized re-distribution of expiring food from retail to charitable organizations. This potentially creates a mechanism that (1) solidifies food poverty and (2) fortifies the paradoxical situation where charitable organizations delivering food aid are dependent on food waste rather than trying to reduce it. To understand the process that has led to this shift, a longitudinal media data analysis on the evolution of the discussion and the interpretations on CFA is presented. By conducting an inductive frame analysis, the paper answers three key questions: How was CFA framed by and through the media in Finland between 1995 and 2016? Has any single frame dominated the discussion at any given point? Finally, what are the characteristics of the frame that focuses on food surplus redistribution? The results suggest that when the practices are framed as potential receivers and redistributors of surplus, perception of CFA is mainly favorable and the root causes for food insecurity are not addressed. Thus, by focusing on environmental sustainability, food aid practices—hitherto depoliticized as a poverty problem—have gained policy relevance in the discursive space of the circular economy; perhaps at the cost of poverty policy and with unintended consequences.

#### Current & Relevant Information:

#### **Introduction**

The recession in the 1990s served as a starting point for charitable food aid (CFA) in Finland. As the welfare state was unable to meet or even acknowledge the rising number of food insecure people, it was civil society organizations, most notably the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Finland (ELCF), which took action. These practices were initially thought of as temporary, which would be made redundant as the economy began to grow again. This notion was later proven wrong as recipients continued to rely on charity, despite economic recovery. (Lehtelä and Kestilä 2014; Ohisalo et al. 2014; Silvasti 2011, 2014, 2015; Silvasti and Karjalainen 2014.) More recently, Finnish food safety guidelines were loosened, paving the way for the redistribution of surplus food from the retail and food industry to food charities (EVIRA 2013; Lehtelä and Kestilä 2014). This is in line with the EU lead effort to

reduce food waste and promote the circular economy (CE) thinking (European Commission 2017; Sitra 2016). As a result, the supply of food for charities increased, and food aid was coupled directly to reducing food waste (Kortetmäki and Silvasti 2017; Silvasti and Salonen forthcoming 2019).

The implementation of the redistributive food bank model Shared Table in Vantaa (Yhteinen Pöytä 2016) and the widespread national interest towards the model indicate that the activities—hitherto organized primarily by scattered NGOs, faith-based organizations (FBOs) and ELCF—are expanding into an organized arrangement comprising of multiple actors working together in a circular manner. Simultaneously, the interpretations and meanings associated with CFA are in transition, as the practices are being restructured and organized anew within the context of a Nordic welfare state. To better understand the process that has taken place, a longitudinal analysis on the evolution of the discussion and on the interpretations produced in this discussion on CFA is necessary. Therefore, this article explores the interpretations and relevance given to CFA in the media by analyzing the interpretative frames utilized in the largest subscription newspaper in Finland, Helsingin Sanomat (HS), during 1995–2016.

For the last two decades CFA in Finland has been the subject of study both during the deep economic recession of the 1990s and the more recent recession of 2009. These studies have ranged from ethnographic studies focusing on the receivers of food aid (e.g., Karjalainen and Järvinen 2000; Salonen 2016a, b) to more theoretical analysis of the ethical connotations embedded in the concept of first world hunger (Kortetmäki 2015). Beyond Finland, studies on the growing dependence on CFA practices in rich countries are plentiful and consist of both critical (e.g., Booth and Whelan 2014; Livingstone 2015; Riches 2002, 2011; Wells and Caraher 2014; for a synthesis on critical literature see; McIntyre et al. 2016) and more favorable viewpoints—especially when coupling CFA with waste reduction (e.g., Hebinck and Villareal 2016; Hebinck et al. 2018; Santini and Cavicchi 2014). Looking at the more critical views, an essential aspect of CFA research is the concept of entitlement; food aid is not something one is entitled to—as opposed to official welfare services—but is a gift (Riches and Silvasti 2014). For an individual, being dependent on CFA practices translates to losing “the freedom of choice and inherent human dignity, because they have to accept charity food in spite of their actual needs and preferences” (ibid., p. 9). According to Poppendieck (1998, p. 5) the emergence and prevalence of food aid reveals a larger shift in a society: the underlying abandonment of the fight against poverty—“the end of entitlement,” as the book subheading states—and a shift towards “damage control rather than prevention.” Silvasti (2014, p. 10) goes on to add that this shift moves the initial aim of poverty reduction to “the margins of social policy because well running successful charity work diminishes the pressure on the political system” (see also Dowler and O’Connor 2012; Riches 2002, 2011; Winne 2008).

This paper aims to unfold the ways in which food aid has been framed in Finnish public discourse during its 20-year lifespan and identifies the key stakeholders involved and the temporal and normative dimensions of these framings. This also allows the paper to prove whether a single framing has been dominant at any given time. Finally, as the emerging CFA paradigm seems to be “food waste redistribution as a social innovation” (e.g., Hebinck et al. 2018), the paper especially focuses on this framework. Thus, the research questions are three-fold: firstly, how has CFA been framed during the 20-years of discussion, and by whom? secondly, has any single frame dominated the discussion at any given point? and finally, how is the framework focusing on food redistribution utilized in the timeline and what are the specific characteristics of the frame? The article is organized as follows: first, the evolution of Finnish food aid is presented in detail, which is followed by a section focusing on CFA and food surplus; second, the data and methodology, along with a few words on frame and framing as concepts, are presented; third, the findings are structured in three sections (overview of the frames, in-depth look into selected frames and a longitudinal analysis of the evolution of framings); and finally, the results are elaborated on in the contexts of Nordic welfare regime, sustainability and circular economy.

#### D. Iceland:

**“Iceland,” The Arctic Institute Center for Circumpolar Security Studies, 1 March 2023** [183] <https://www.thearcticinstitute.org/countries/iceland/?cn-reloaded=1>

#### Overview:

The majority of Iceland’s land mass sits just south of the Arctic Circle, with only the small island of Grimsey located partially inside the Arctic Circle. The country’s physical landscape is a mix of barren fields, rich agricultural lands, and stark peaks. The high amounts of precipitation and generally warmer weather than other areas at its latitude is due to its place in the Atlantic Ocean’s Gulf Stream. Average annual precipitation ranges from 400 to 4000 mm, with averages of 3000 mm on the south coast of the island.

Iceland, an island country in between the North Atlantic and Arctic Oceans, sits atop the northern Mid-Atlantic Ridge. Its position on the Ridge results in extensive volcanic and geothermal activity. Most of the country is a recently created mountainous lava desert, with the highest elevation at 2,110 meters (6,923 feet) above sea level. Just over 10 percent of the island is covered by glaciers, though these are now rapidly retreating due to climate change. Most of Iceland remains undeveloped, with the vast majority of its population residing in a ring along the coast. Twenty percent of the main island is used for grazing, while one percent is cultivated. The majority of Iceland’s population resides in four cities: Reykjavík, Kópavogur, Akureyri, and Hafnarfjörður. Residents of these four cities account for 60 percent of the country’s entire population.

Despite only having a population of slightly more than 337,000, in 2017 more than two million people visited the island. While bringing a significant boom to the Icelandic economy after the 2008 Icelandic financial crisis, this tourism has brought environmental concerns with it. The government of Iceland, the tourism industry, and a growing body of academic researchers have dedicated much time, thought, and energy in ensuring that nature conservation efforts are not jeopardized by such a large increase in annual visitors. Building tourist infrastructure in an already saturated housing market, developing wilderness areas as tourist resorts, damaging moss-covered geographies, and the breaking of recent volcanic features are just a few examples of how tourism is changing the Icelandic landscapes and having an impact on its environment.

Increased energy production from hydroelectric and geothermal sources has also put pressure on Iceland's natural landscape, demanding more dams to be built across streams, rivers, and estuaries and wilderness areas to be reclaimed for geothermal plants. Geothermal plants emit hydrogen-sulphide, which is both corrosive and toxic. Hydrogen sulphur does not necessarily lead to any specific diseases; but it does cause complications for those already suffering from serious illness. It must be acknowledged that Iceland's dedication to renewable energy sources has made it a global leader in clean energy and one of the lowest energy sector greenhouse gas emitters. However, Iceland has seen an increase since 1990 in its greenhouse gas emissions from its industrial and transport sectors.

Iceland also has significant issues of soil erosion and desertification due to its high content of volcanic ash. Today nearly one third of the country is desert, though when the Vikings first settled the island, it was lush with trees, shrubs, and grass. The introduction of sheep, deforestation, and human settlement by Iceland first settlers, in addition to frequent volcanic eruptions, glacial river floods, and katabatic winds, has led to the landscape of ice and fire that Iceland is known for today. The Icelandic government has taken action against soil erosion and desertification since 1895, and has established the Soil Conservation Service of Iceland to combat desertification and promote sustainable land use.

The health of the ocean is of great importance to Iceland as an island nation. Therefore, Iceland imbues great importance into maintaining a healthy ocean environment and to ensure sustainable utilization of the ocean as one of the core sectors of Iceland's economy. Iceland's policies for ocean management and conservation are based on the UN Law of the Sea, which the country ratified in 1985; the concept of sustainable development, and the view that responsibility for the conservation and utilization of marine ecosystems is best placed in the hands of those states directly affected by the decisions taken and with the greatest interests at stake. Perhaps the largest environmental marine issue for Iceland is the sustainable harvesting of fish and other living marine resources. Opposition to the EU Common Fisheries Policy led in large part to the decision of a new right-of centre

government to discontinue Iceland's membership bid to the European Union in 2013. Despite being a fishing country with a focus on sustainable use of the ocean, Iceland is generally not regarded as an Arctic Ocean littoral State as its Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) is not adjacent to the high seas portion of the Central Arctic Ocean.

#### Current & Relevant Information:

Iceland became an independent republic from the Danish monarchy in 1944 after nearly six centuries of colonial rule. The original settlement of Iceland began in the late 9th century, perhaps around 874, by Norse settlers who migrated from Scandinavia because of civil strife and a shortage in arable lands. Though there is archeological evidence to support that Gaelic monks from a Hiberno-Scottish mission were there in the 8th century, the Norse Vikings were the first to bring sustained, growing communities to the island. By 930, the majority of arable land in Iceland was already claimed and the world's first parliament (the "Thing") was formed. From DNA sampling today, the native population of Iceland can be traced to those of Ireland, Britain, and Scandinavia. Because of their relative isolation throughout history and small founding population, Icelanders are highly genetically homogeneous and have been the subject of much genomics research.

Icelandic culture and language are strongly derived from Norse tradition. The Icelandic language, unique to the island and a direct descendent of Old Norse, is the basis for a rich culture of writing, particularly Sagas, poems, and ancient literature. Njáls saga, a saga about an epic blood feud, and Grænlendinga saga and Eiríks saga, describing the discovery and settlement of Greenland and Newfoundland, are among the most popular and still told today. By some accounts, Iceland has more writers, books published, and more books read per capita than anywhere else in the world. Traditional crafts such as silversmithing, weaving, and wood carving are, among folk song and dance, widely practiced.

As of 2022, more than 376,000 people live in Iceland , and 93 percent of the population is Icelandic. Nearly 90 percent of the entire population lives in urban areas, with 60 percent living in the capital region of Reykjavík. Iceland inhibits a strong traditional liberal and progressive Nordic outlook similar to Norway and Sweden, and consistently ranks high for measurements for quality of life in surveys like the United Nations Human Development Index. Icelandic society has a high degree of gender and marriage equality, with a strong legal system to support child protection and women's rights. Because of their historic isolation, Icelanders value independence and self-sufficiency, not only seen in their society but in their economy and national policies.

Today Icelanders are by and large Lutheran with other Catholic and Christian minorities existing. While many people identify as Christian, over forty percent of the population considers themselves to be non-religious or convinced atheists. Even



though many Icelanders identify as Christian, there are still some who believe in Icelandic folklore, such as Huldafólk, hidden people who live in rocks.

**“Is Iceland in the Arctic Circle?” Christina Degener, Iceland Unlimited, January 2017 [184] <https://icelandunlimited.is/is-iceland-in-the-arctic-circle/>**

#### Overview:

Iceland is located between Greenland and Norway and is an island in the middle of the Atlantic Ocean. For many people, the name sounds already so “cold” that they assume this island must be close to the North Pole. Have you ever wondered how far North it is actually located? Is Iceland in the Arctic Circle?

#### Current & Relevant Information:

##### **What is the Arctic Circle?**

The Arctic Circle is the imaginary circle around the earth, parallel to the equator, at latitude 66° 33' N. The Arctic Circle marks the latitude on the Earth's surface above which the sun does not set on the summer solstice and does not rise on the winter solstice. Travelers wishing to cross over the Arctic Circle should take note that the Arctic Circle crosses only the countries Norway, Sweden, Finland, Russia, the U.S., Canada, and Greenland. Is Iceland in the Arctic Circle as well? You will learn more about it in a second.

##### **Is Iceland in the Arctic Circle?**

The mainland of Iceland is just a few degrees south of the Arctic Circle. The Arctic Circle does, however, pass through Grímsey Island, which lies only 40 kilometers (25 miles) off the North coast of Iceland.

##### **Some Facts about Grímsey Island**

Grímsey is the northernmost inhabited Icelandic territory. Approximately 100 people live on this small island. Grímsey has an area of 5.3 km<sup>2</sup> (2.0 sq mi) and a maximum elevation of 105 meters (344 ft).

Most of the inhabitants live from commercial fishing. There are rich fishing grounds around the island.

**“Iceland,” Arctic Council [185] <https://arctic-council.org/en/about/states/iceland/>**

#### Overview:

##### **Quick Facts**

##### **Arctic Territory:**

All of Iceland

##### **Arctic Population:**

365,000

Current & Relevant Information:

**Iceland and the Arctic Region**

Iceland is an Arctic State where the Arctic Circle passes through its northernmost community, Grimsey Island, 40 kilometers off the north coast of Iceland. Iceland has approximately 365,000 inhabitants.

Iceland's key industries have been largely based on the sustainable utilization of natural marine and energy resources. The country has the highest share of renewable energy in any national total energy budget, with about 85 percent of the total primary energy supply derived from domestically produced renewable energy sources and geothermal water is used to heat around 90 percent of Icelandic homes. In recent years, tourism has become a key pillar of the Icelandic economy and growing emphasis has been placed on innovation and the creative sector.

**Indigenous Peoples**

Iceland is the only Arctic State that does not have an Indigenous population. From the start of settlements in the ninth century AD to today, Iceland inhabitants have mostly come from Northern Europe.

**“The Arctic Region,” Government of Iceland [186]**  
<https://www.government.is/topics/foreign-affairs/arctic-region/>

Overview:

Arctic issues have in recent years become ever more prominent internationally as well as domestically. The discussion on the changing Arctic and its relationship with climatic change, discussions on the utilization and protection of natural resources, continental shelf and sovereignty demands, societal changes and the opening of new seaways is and will be of interest today and in the future.

Current & Relevant Information:

It is clear that few states have a greater interest in the sustainable development of the area than Iceland, since all of the country and a large part of its territorial waters lie within the boundaries of the Arctic region. This is unique among the member states of the Arctic Council. Arctic issues touch nearly every aspect of Icelandic society and are a key foreign policy priority in Iceland.

Iceland's policy in Arctic issues is anchored in a parliamentary resolution adopted unanimously by Althingi in the spring of 2011 which outlines 12 priority areas. They cover e.g., Iceland's position in the region, the importance of the Arctic Council and the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea, climate change, sustainable use of natural resources and security and commercial interests. Emphasis is

furthermore placed on neighbor-state collaboration with the Faroe Islands and Greenland as well as the rights of indigenous peoples.

The Arctic Council, since its establishment in 1996, has become the most important multinational forum for Arctic issues. In addition to the eight founding members, six organizations of indigenous peoples have permanent seats on the Council and 39 parties have observer status: 13 states, 13 intergovernmental organizations and 13 non-governmental organizations. Decisions are made unanimously in the Council.

#### Social Issues:

**“Iceland: inequalities and social cohesion in psychosomatic health – individual and community processes,” Thoroddur Bjarnason and Stefán Hrafn Jónsson, ResearchGate [187]**

[https://www.researchgate.net/publication/267258549\\_Iceland\\_Iceland\\_inequalities\\_and\\_social\\_cohesion\\_in\\_psychosomatic\\_health\\_-\\_individual\\_and\\_community\\_processes](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/267258549_Iceland_Iceland_inequalities_and_social_cohesion_in_psychosomatic_health_-_individual_and_community_processes)

#### Summary:

Mental and physical health are intimately related to inequality and marginalization. People with higher socioeconomic status tend to enjoy better health than people in lower positions. The association between inequality and poor health appears to be rooted in various social, cultural, economic and behavioral differences.

The socioeconomic status of parents may influence the psychological and physical health of children in similar ways as among adults. At community level, adolescents living in neighborhoods characterized by low socioeconomic status, material deprivation, regional marginalization and high levels of non-traditional families may also experience more physical, psychological and social problems. Adolescents also belong to social status hierarchies of educational achievement and peer popularity that are partially independent of their families.

The Iceland case study presents a multilevel model of these processes that was tested among Icelandic adolescents taking part in the 2006 HBSC survey. It was found that adolescents who did not live with both biological parents reported significantly poorer psychosomatic health. The presence of a step-parent in the household did not seem to diminish the negative effect of the absence of a biological parent, and other types of inequalities in economic situation, social status and social inequality did not seem to account for this effect of family structure. Both material deprivation and having parents who were not employed had a direct, significant effect on diminished psychosomatic health among children and adolescents. Lack of parental employment appeared to have a stronger effect in some communities than others.

Icelandic girls aged 10–17 suffered from significantly poorer psychosomatic health than boys. This effect persisted after other inequalities related to families, status and

social support had been taken into account. The strength of this effect varied significantly across school communities.

Lack of academic achievement in school was a significant stressor that diminished psychosomatic health among young people. Similarly, a lack of social achievement in the adolescent society of school was also associated with a significant diminution in psychosomatic health. Social support had a strong main effect of psychosocial health, independent of other factors. Somewhat unexpectedly, this effect varied significantly between school communities. Measures of community-level differences did not play an important role in individual psychosomatic health status among adolescents.

Due to the small size of the country, Iceland provides a unique opportunity to study the implementation of a nationwide policy, its successes and shortcomings, and the lessons learned.

The Public Health Institute of Iceland has for several years promoted an integrated approach to adolescent public health policy. The importance of social integration in the collective well-being of adolescents is emphasized, with special attention to the potential of social and normative cohesion among parents for creating positive outcomes among adolescents. This strategy covers such varied topics as mental and physical health, substance use, hygiene and nutrition.

Implications for future research are discussed.

#### Current & Relevant Information:

#### **Introduction**

Mental and physical health is intimately related to inequality and marginalization. People with higher education and socioeconomic status tend to enjoy better health than people in lower positions. The association between inequality and poor health appears to be rooted in various social, cultural, economic and behavioral differences. Frequently cited factors contributing to this association include differences in lifestyle and consumption patterns, increased physical and emotional strain at work, and the strain of poverty and lack of social mobility. Unemployment in particular appears to be related to increased psychological distress. Women experience more physical and psychological problems than men, which can in part be traced to gender inequalities in society.

Parents' socioeconomic status may influence the psychological and physical health of children in similar ways as among adults. Parental education and income can affect children's life chances in various ways, and children share the lifestyle and consumption patterns of their parents to a considerable degree. Family structure has various social and economic repercussions and the social and emotional complexities of a non-traditional family structure may be a significant stressor in the lives of children. At community level, adolescents living in neighborhoods

characterized by low socioeconomic status, material deprivation, regional marginalization and high levels of non-traditional families may also experience more physical, psychological and social problems than those living in more stable and affluent communities.

However, adolescents also belong to social status hierarchies independent of their families. In schools, there are two status hierarchies based on achievement: the formal education system, and the informal hierarchy of adolescent society. Inequalities in educational achievement among adolescents may cause similar strains to those caused by inequalities in socioeconomic status among adults. Adolescents can therefore be expected to suffer from doing poorly in school. Similarly, the strict social ranking of adolescents among themselves creates profound inequalities that may have a strong negative impact on “unpopular” children – those with the lowest status in adolescent society.

Social cohesion and social support have been found to be effective “buffers” against the negative effects of social inequalities. In the case of adolescents, social support from parents is the most important form of such support. The negative effects on psychosomatic health of lower parental socioeconomic status, non-traditional family structure, academic troubles and unpopularity in school can therefore be expected to be less serious for those adolescents enjoying strong parental support.

**“Social workers in Iceland are part of the protest regarding the wage gap and other issues that specifically affect women in Iceland,” International Federation of Social Workers, 25 October 2018 [188] <https://www.ifsw.org/social-workers-in-iceland-are-part-of-the-protest-regarding-the-wage-gap-and-other-issues-that-specifically-affect-women-in-iceland/>**

#### Overview:

On 24 October, at 14:55 Icelandic time, women across Iceland walked off the job in protest the gender wage gap and other issues that specifically affect women in Iceland. The first Women ‘s day was in 1975 when thousands of women in Iceland protested their wages and walked out of their workplaces. This was the sixth-time women in Iceland walked out to protest the wage gap between men and women that still exist in Iceland.

#### Current & Relevant Information:

Even though Iceland is the country at the top of the list when it comes to equality, the average wage of women in Iceland is only 74% of the average wage of men.

At the meeting yesterday, special focus was put on women of foreign origin, who are in an especially vulnerable position in Icelandic society. Thousands of people gathered in Reykjavík yesterday, mostly women but also many men, to claim the importance of equal pay in Iceland and safety for women at their workplace.

Social worker in Iceland is one of the professions that know all too well how wages of women are held back, despite the importance and responsibility of their work. Encouraging women to participate in the labor market is vital to ensure economic growth and social inclusion.

**“Climate Change,” Government of Iceland [189]**

<https://www.government.is/topics/environment-climate-and-nature-protection/climate-change/>

Overview:

Iceland aims to achieve carbon neutrality before 2040 and to cut greenhouse gas emissions by 40% by 2030 under the Paris Agreement. A Climate Action Plan, updated in 2020, contains 48 actions and is Iceland’s main policy instrument to reach its goals of cutting emissions and reach carbon neutrality.

Iceland’s emissions profile is in many ways unusual. Almost all heating and electricity generation is provided for by renewables – hydro and geothermal energy. Iceland has great potential for carbon uptake from the atmosphere by afforestation and revegetation, and to curb emissions from soils by reclaiming drained wetlands. The biggest sources of emissions (outside land use) are industrial processes, road transport, agriculture, fisheries and waste management.

Current & Relevant Information:

The Icelandic Climate Action Plan consists of 48 actions intended to help Iceland meet its Paris Agreement targets for 2030 and reach the government’s aim to make Iceland carbon neutral before 2040.

Iceland is committed to cut emissions by 55% by 2030, as part of a common effort by 29 European countries. Iceland has an agreement on this with the EU and Norway, and has comparable climate regulation, including participating in emissions trading (EU-ETS).

The Environment Agency of Iceland is responsible for measuring and reporting Iceland’s emissions of greenhouse gases and carbon uptake by afforestation and other means.

The Icelandic government has commissioned three scientific assessments on the impacts of climate change on nature and society. Impacts include receding glaciers, expanding woodlands and increased risks of natural disasters. Of particular concern is ocean acidification and its possible impact on marine life and fisheries.

Scientific assessments have outlined main concerns for adaptation, including preparing for changes in sea level and river flows. Work is under way for a national adaptation plan.

**“Combating Child Poverty in Iceland,” Imani A. Smikle, The Borgen Project, 5 November 2020 [190] <https://borgenproject.org/combating-child-poverty-in-iceland/?nowprocket=1>**

#### Overview:

Popular for its beautiful landmarks and picturesque views, Iceland is now facing an issue that highlights a much darker reality taking place on the Nordic Island. Iceland has been able to keep poverty at a relatively low percentage for much of its history. However, in the past decade, the country has experienced a drastic rise in poverty and child poverty in Iceland in particular. One can largely attribute this to the economic collapse that the country experienced a little over a decade ago.

#### Current & Relevant Information:

##### **The Situation**

In 2008, Iceland's banks defaulted as a result of loans that the country had taken out with many foreign banks. At the time, Icelandic banks were some of the most lucrative banks globally. The country accumulated a massive amount of debt following large loans and grand foreign investments. The intention was to further boost the economy and to take advantage of the financial prosperity taking place in the country at the time. The value of the Icelandic currency, the Krona, was at an all-time high with a 900% increase in value. The country experienced an economic boom, and citizens received encouragement to take part in the flourishing economy. As a result, many purchased expensive homes, took on multiple mortgages and invested in foreign companies. The country was, unfortunately, unable to pay these large sums back. The result was catastrophic. Banks defaulted on foreign loans leading to a massive national financial crisis. Iceland's credit was tarnished and almost every business in the country had gone bankrupt. Citizens ended up with large bills with little or no way to pay them. What followed was an extreme rise in poverty.

##### **The Consequences of the Crash**

Healthcare expenses experienced a peak, and with mortgages nearly doubling in cost, the price of living increased exponentially. Many households were unable to afford the basic and vital services required for daily living. According to a report discussing the consequences of the crisis, unemployment rates rose to 7.6%. This was 5% higher than the annual unemployment rates prior to the economic downturn. Inflation was another result of the crash. Mortgage prices increased nearly doubling. With the national currency, the krona, experiencing a decrease in value, the price of many goods and services suffered an impact as well. Iceland saw a substantial rise in housing insecurity and homelessness. Citizens took to the streets to protest many of the issues taking place at the time, and to express their frustrations with the



government's reactions to the crisis. This resulted in a new left-leaning government that promised to offer support for its struggling citizens.

### **Child Poverty in Iceland and Government Aid**

Child poverty saw a drastic rise during this time of economic downturn. In fact, child poverty increased from 11.2% to 31.6% between 2008 and 2012. Unemployment was on the rise, and families faced immense financial strife that greatly affected the home. Iceland's government was able to provide its residents with support for regular access to vital resources such as food, housing and healthcare. Healthcare programs that Iceland put in place prior to the crash offered much-needed support to Icelandic citizens with healthcare services during the crash. The Icelandic government also provided support in many areas. This included welfare services for low-income households, along with a tax decrease for low-income earners and a tax increase for high-income earners. This ensured financial support for the most vulnerable during the crash. Low and mid-income-earning citizens received social benefits and debt relief. Wealth redistribution played a large role in the economic support provided for citizens during this time.

### **Confronting Child Poverty**

Throughout Iceland's history, poverty rates have been well managed in comparison to other less developed Islands. Prior to the financial crisis, Iceland held a relatively low poverty rate. According to a Statistics Iceland report, a total of 9% of the population was at risk of living in poverty in comparison to 16% in other Nordic Islands and the estimated 23% in the United Kingdom. While poverty existed in the country, it was certainly not as high as during or after the crisis. Iceland has done tremendous work to repair its economy. The programs that Iceland's government implemented provided support for many low-income families while also helping to boost its then damaged economy. Unfortunately, citizens who plummeted into poverty as a result of the economic downturn have struggled to find a way out. To combat this, the Icelandic government has implemented many methods of support for citizens facing these challenges. This includes lower-cost healthcare services, debt relief for mortgage holders and social services for low income earning citizens. These policies have proven to provide much promise for a reduction in poverty overall in the country. The goal is that with a decrease in general poverty, the child poverty rates will also reduce in Iceland.

**“The Welfare Watch Iceland,” CHRODIS [191]** <http://chrodis.eu/wp-content/uploads/2017/03/the-welfare-watch.pdf>

#### Overview:

The Welfare Watch was established in accordance with a cabinet resolution in 2009 as a response to the economic crisis and it was re-established in 2014. The Minister of Social Affairs and Social Security appointed the Welfare Watch, a Steering



Committee, with the main role to monitor systematically the social and financial consequences of the economic situation for families and individuals in Iceland and to propose measures to help households and in particular vulnerable groups. Originally the Welfare Watch had representatives from 19 stakeholders, among others from six ministries, Social Partners, NGOs, Union of Local Authorities, The City of Reykjavik, the Directorate of Health, the Directorate of Labor and the Council of Equal rights of man and women. In 2014 the Welfare Watch expanded and is now a platform with 35 stakeholders represented from all sectors and levels of the society. The Welfare Watch is a governmental enterprise, with chairman and an employee provided by the Ministry of Welfare. Other stakeholders do not get special payment for their participation but donate the time of their representatives to the work (is considered a part of their daily work). The Welfare Watch established the Social Indicators which have been published every year since 2012. The Social Indicators are a collection of indicators regarding democracy and activities, standard of living and welfare, health and social cohesion. The Welfare Watch has frequent meetings and has smaller working task groups. Several proposals and reports have been delivered by the Welfare Watch. Social gradient in health is a fact in Iceland, like in other European countries. The report Review of the social determinants and the health divide in the WHO European Region informed the development of Health 2020, the European Policy framework for health and well-being. The report emphasizes that without improvements in all the social determinants of health, there will be no significant reductions in health inequities. Health 2020's ultimate goal is to achieve health equity by reducing the socially determined inequities in the WHO European Region. The key to success is engagement of stakeholders across sectors and levels, like is facilitated by the work of the Welfare Watch.

#### Current & Relevant Information:

Originally it was to monitor the social and financial consequences of the economic situation for families and individuals and propose measures to help households. In 2014 the objectives were narrowed to focus on families with children and those living in severe poverty. In January 2015 proposals regarding these groups were published and introduced to the Minister of Social Affairs and Housing. The main themes were:

1. Child benefits and child social insurance
2. Criteria for the minimum subsistence
3. The Housing situation
4. Basic service
5. Case coordinators
6. Cooperation with NGO's and a project fund

**“Human Rights Issues in Icelandic Society: Regarding Freedom of Religion and Conscience,” Hope Knútsson, ohchr.org, January 2011 [192]**

<https://www.ohchr.org/sites/default/files/lib-docs/HRBodies/UPR/Documents/session12/IS/IEHA-IcelandicEthicalHumanistAssociation-eng.pdf>

Overview:

This report is submitted by Siðmennt, the Icelandic Ethical Humanist Association January 2011 and was written by Hope Knútsson, president of Siðmennt.

Current & Relevant Information:

**Separation of Church and State**

Iceland still has a state religion. The Icelandic constitution gives special privileges and protection to one religious denomination, the Evangelical Lutheran church, despite the fact that there are at least 30 other religious organizations in Iceland and one secular life stance organization. The Icelandic government collects church taxes and distributes funds to registered religious organizations. The state church receives billions of krónur above and beyond the standard amount that other religious groups get.

According to one of Iceland’s leading human rights lawyers, Oddný Mjöll Arnardóttir who is also a law professor, the Icelandic constitution does not offer people with a secular life stance the same protection as people with a religious life stance. In an article called “Trúfrelsi, sannfæringarfrelsi og jafnrétti í íslensku stjórnarskránni” she stated that the Icelandic constitution offers poorer protection of human rights in this area than the various human rights declarations which Iceland has signed.

The role of the state regarding religion and life stance affairs should be to protect the rights of all citizens to hold and behave according to whatever life stance they so choose. Government should be neutral and independent regarding religion. Individuals’ life stances, be they religious or secular, are a private matter and it is not the domain of the state to discriminate against people based on their life stance.

In a verdict by the Human Rights Court in Strassborg on December 13th, 2001 in the case Metropolitan Church of Bessarabia against Moldavia, it is stated that it is the duty of the state to be neutral in its relations with different religions and other life stance groups. The judgment was based on Article 9 of the European Declaration of Human Rights regarding freedom of thought, conscience, and religion.

Non-religious life stance organizations like Siðmennt (Humanists) are not supported financially and do not have equal legal status to religious life stance organizations despite being in existence for 20 years and offering similar services to religions. The fact that these organizations do not have equal legal and funding status is a human rights violation.

The Icelandic constitution needs to be changed. There are two contradictory articles in the constitution. One grants privileges to one religion above and beyond all others while the other guarantees religious freedom. This allows the government to discriminate against other religions and life stances, which is also a violation of the equality rule of the constitution.

Article 62 says that the Evangelical Lutheran Church shall be the state church of Iceland and the government shall therefore support and protect it.

Article 65 says that everyone shall be equal under the law and be guaranteed human rights regardless of gender, religion, opinions, ethnic origin, race, economic status, or other position.

The Icelandic constitution is now under review. A constitutional assembly was elected in November 2010 to initiate the process of revising the constitution and was supposed to start meeting in February 2011 but the Icelandic Supreme Court declared the election to be null and void because of some irregularities in the election process. Its future remains uncertain at the time of this writing, (January 2011). If the constitutional assembly gets reinstated then an opportunity will exist for Iceland to correct the human rights contradictions in its constitution, although there is no guarantee that this will happen since many of the elected members are sympathizers for the national church. One can understand the historical context in which a state church was established in the 19th century when Icelanders adopted their constitution. However, there is no rationale for such an arrangement in a democratic, varied, and secular society built on freedom and human rights in the 21st century. Modern societies in today's world cannot at the same time have a state religion.

#### E. Norway:

**“Norway,” The Arctic Institute Center for Circumpolar Security Studies, 1 August 2022 [193] <https://www.thearcticinstitute.org/countries/norway/>**

#### Overview:

In Norway, the Arctic is considered everything north of the Arctic Circle, despite the arguably minimal variation between the areas north and south of 66°34N. In terms of its foreign policy engagement, Norway distinguishes between the extreme Arctic (referring to the North Pole and the uninhabited areas in the so-called High Arctic) and the more hospitable and populated parts of Northern Norway and Svalbard, deemed the “High North” or “nordområdene” in Norwegian.

The landmass of the two northern counties (Nordland and Troms og Finnmark) accounts for a third of the landmass of mainland Norway (totaling approximately 100,000 km<sup>2</sup> out of approximately 300,000 km<sup>2</sup>). Svalbard and Jan Mayen archipelagos add another 85,000 km<sup>2</sup>. The climate in North Norway—with the

exception of Svalbard—does not vary significantly from the southern part of the country, as in the case of some Arctic countries.

The average temperature in Tromsø, the largest city in the north, oscillates between -4 °C (25 °F) in January and 12 °C (54 °F) in July. The North Norwegian coast is ice free and, due to the Gulf Stream, experiences fewer extreme temperatures than cities further south in for example Canada or the United States. Longyearbyen in Svalbard, on the other hand, experiences more arctic-like conditions, with -13 °C (9 °F) in March and only 8 °C (46 °F) in July. Climate change has especially affected the ecological conditions on Svalbard, as the summer sea ice has gradually receded. This has an adverse impact on plant and animal life, not only on Svalbard, but also in mainland Norway. Changes related to the tree-line, movements of fish stocks and agricultural yield, challenge the ability of local communities to adapt and sustain their livelihoods in the north to a greater extent than elsewhere in Norway.

#### Current & Relevant Information:

Tromsø is the largest city in the Norwegian Arctic with 76 thousand inhabitants (2019), followed by Bodø with 52 thousand inhabitants (2019). In total, roughly 480 thousand people live in the three Arctic counties of Nordland, Troms and Finnmark. Another 2,667 people live on Svalbard. Bodø is the regional capital of Nordland; Tromsø the regional capital of Troms; and Vadsø the regional capital of Finnmark. Albeit sparsely populated in a European context, the population numbers are relatively high when contrasted to the North American Arctic. Although difficult to specify exactly, the Sámi population in Norway is between 40–50 thousand, with most residing in the three northern counties. Karasjok, Finnmark, is the seat of the Sámi Parliament of Norway.

The traditional lands of the Sámi people in Norway, Sápmi, stretch from Hedmark county in the middle of Norway, to the Russian border in the north. Even though the Sámi are a minority in most parts of Sápmi, traditional reindeer herding is still present across the land. Sámi reindeer herding takes place in a total of 140 municipalities. Reindeer herding—and other traditional Sámi livelihoods such as fishing, hunting and gathering—are some of the most important ways in which the Sámi cultural heritage is preserved in Norway. The Sámi languages and traditions are thus part of daily life in Sámi communities, in contrast to other parts of the society where Norwegian culture dominates. At the same time, the Sámi people are a part of modern Norway and are keeping old traditions alive as well as developing the culture. The traditional livelihoods; however, are dependent on land, which at times there are conflicts over in the North of Norway.

Since its opening in 1989, the interests of the Sámi population have been ensured by the Sámi Parliament. The opening of the Parliament was seen as the end of an assimilation policy enforced by the Norwegian government since the 1850s. Norway was subsequently one of the first countries to ratify the ILO Convention No. 169 on

Indigenous and Tribal Peoples in Independent Countries, which ensures the Indigenous peoples' right to consultation before decisions regarding them are being made. In 2005, the Sámi Parliament and the Norwegian government signed an agreement which formalizes the procedures for consultation on all relevant policy issues. The increased focus on business opportunities by actors outside of the Arctic could lead to more pressure on an already endangered culture. It is worth noting the Sámi Parliament's many funding schemes to support small scale businesses and tourism.

**“What is the Point of Norway’s new Arctic Policy?” Andreas Osthagen, The Arctic Institute Center for Circumpolar Security Studies, 2 December 2020 [194]**

<https://www.thearcticinstitute.org/point-norway-new-arctic-policy/>

#### Overview:

Norway’s new High North policy is a complex mix of initiatives and statements. The main rationale is still ensuring a developed northern region so that Norway can stand strong vis-à-vis the great powers in the north. In addition, the policy plays a role in domestic politics ahead of next year’s election.

Last Friday, in a week that began with Northern Norway taking its first premier division gold in football, the Norwegian government presented a new white paper on the High North to the Norwegian Parliament. Various ministers descended on the northern cities of Alta, Bodø, and Tromsø to present work that has been underway for several years: this is the first white paper since 2011.

Any Norwegian government must balance many different interests. The priorities of the ministries in Oslo are not necessarily the same as the wishes of Hammerfest municipality or Nordland county. Vladimir Putin is also paying attention. Many footballs need to be juggled.

If football were an indicator of the situation in the northernmost third of Norway, perhaps such a policy document would be superfluous. But Northern Norway has a number of challenges that require special attention. Not only that; what Norway is doing in the north is also of great importance for both its foreign and security policies and concerns.

#### Current & Relevant Information:

#### **Concluding Remarks**

In sum, Norway’s current Arctic policy white paper boils down to a desire by the current government—especially prime minister Erna Solberg and foreign minister Ine Eriksen Søreide—to show action in the north. Symbolic and real. Sprinkled with domestic political positioning.

The 2020-white paper marks a turn from foreign and security issues in the north towards regional development in Northern Norway. Albeit a welcome shift for those

living in the north—which constitute almost 10% of Norway's population—it does little to address the increasingly tense security situation in the north.

As Norway is uniquely positioned between the East and the West in the Arctic, finding ways to address this situation and related concerns should still be a priority. In any case, the High North will continue to be the part of Norway where local politics meets the world, and regional measures may have foreign policy consequences. That is why Norway has a separate policy for the Arctic.

**“Norway’s arctic policy: still high North, low tension?” Andreas Østhagen, The Polar Journal, 25 April 2021 [195]**

<https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/2154896X.2021.1911043?src=>

Abstract:

For Norway, the Arctic is an integral part of the country in terms of both economic development and security considerations. Since 2005, consecutive governments in Oslo have made use of this fact, in combination with international attention given to the north, to foster a High North policy framed around regional economic development, climate issues and international cooperation (especially vis-à-vis Russia). However, over the last few years, challenges have emerged. Focusing on the foreign and security policy aspects of Norway’s Arctic approach, this article defines Norway’s Northern engagement and how this engagement has evolved since 2005. Then, the challenges currently facing Norway in the domain of foreign and security policy are discussed in terms of the new Arctic policy document released in late-2020. These challenges are broadly surmised as relating to Russia’s military posture and the use of the Arctic as an arena for a China–US tug of war.

Current & Relevant Information:

**Introduction**

In 2005, the then Norwegian foreign minister Jonas Gahr Støre urged the people to ‘Look north.’ Speaking in Tromsø, the self-proclaimed Arctic capital of Norway, he launched what was to become Norway’s new foreign policy flagship: the High North policy (nordområdepolitikken). With one-third of the landmass and 80% of its maritime domain located north of the Arctic Circle, it is no wonder that Norwegian politicians have been quick to seize the opportunity to promote a hybrid mixture of foreign and regional policy tools as the world has turned its attention northwards. Other Arctic countries – like Denmark, Sweden and the USA – have been much slower to embrace the Arctic as a foreign policy priority, if at all.

In part, Norway’s orientation towards the Arctic occurred as the result of a domestic initiative because economic opportunities were increasingly becoming apparent in the North. In part, international conditions were ripe as climate awareness, resource potential and Russian re-emergence started to appear on the agenda. Lastly, the new majority government in office beginning in the autumn of 2005 acted as policy

entrepreneurs, building on the discrete Northern policy steps taken by the previous government.

When the Norwegian High North policy saw the light of day 15 years ago, it was an optimistic promise of increased attention to the North, new economic opportunities and the strengthening of dialogue and cooperation with Russia. In the beginning, it looked hopeful: after the rather significant maritime boundary agreement with Russia regarding the Barents Sea was enacted in 2010, Russia's then President Medvedev declared a 'new era' of relations between Norway and Russia. A border regime was created in 2012 so that the inhabitants of north-eastern Norway could travel visa free across the border to northwest Russia. The Arctic Council, created in 1996 to ensure cooperation on a range of issues in the Arctic, rose in stature and Norway managed to get the secretariat to Tromsø in 2011.

However, in 2014, the mood soured. First and foremost, the Russian annexation of Crimea contributed to changing the political climate in the North. Falling oil prices also led to the disappearance of many of the economic interests associated with the High North and to projects being placed on hold. Those who had expected (or hoped for) a Klondike in the North were disappointed, and the enthusiasm for the entire High North policy began to cool. It went from being an 'priority' to a 'responsibility'.

In late-2020 the government in Oslo, which has held office for almost eight years, released the third Arctic policy of Norway (the first came in 2005 and the second in 2011). In terms of foreign policy, this signaled a third phase of the Norwegian High North policy: a phase that has been characterized by great power rivalry and harsh rhetoric outside Norway's borders. Of the various parts of the Arctic, challenges are the greatest in the European part – Norway's northern areas. Here, the military presence and provocative exercise activities have been increasing the most. Aftenposten – Norway's largest printed newspaper – describes this development as a 'power struggle on Norway's doorstep'. Although researchers have largely rejected the idea of a budding resource war in the North, the view of and discourse about the Arctic has changed. More countries are now looking North and seem eager to use the Arctic as an arena for foreign policy influence and symbolic politics.

In the last decade, the Norwegian government has made use of the phrase 'High North, low tension' to highlight that the Arctic, despite fantastical claims by some scholars and media outlets, is a region characterized by amicable affairs. However, the question remains as to whether this is still an accurate portrayal of the current state of affairs and – crucially – Norway's Arctic approach. This article examines and reviews Norway's Arctic endeavors, not only limited to the official policy documents but also taking into consideration wider security concerns and interests.

The focus is on foreign policy dimensions, with an explicit emphasis on security policies. The article examines what defines Norway's Northern engagement and how that engagement has evolved since 2005. Furthermore, how priorities have shifted in

terms of security policy in the North is examined. The discussion then turns to the challenges that Norway is currently facing in the domains of foreign and security policy in 2021 and that it may face in the future. These challenges are broadly categorized as relating to Russia's military posture – as is typical in Norwegian foreign and security policy outlooks – and the use of the Arctic as an arena for a China–US tug of war, which has emerged as an entirely new dimension of Arctic politics.

### **Concluding remarks**

Norway has been one of the most Arctic-focused of all the circumpolar countries in the past two decades. This is partly due to Norway's geographic position – located at the relatively temperate nexus between the North Atlantic, the Barents Sea and the Arctic Ocean – and partly a result of its political handywork starting in 2003-5 to elevate the importance of the High North on both foreign and domestic policy agendas. Norway's Arctic policy endeavor has undergone several phases since its creation over 15 years ago. Excitement and euphoria dominated the first phase, while security issues and economic disillusionment dominated the second. Now we are in the third phase, which has been dominated by geostrategic concerns and symbolic chest thumping by global actors.

Although the Norwegian High North (or Arctic if you will) policy is a unique hybrid mixture of regional and foreign policy tools, this article emphasizes the broader security dimensions of Norway's Northern policy approach over the last decades. As Arctic 'middle powers' that are often free of broad international entanglements, countries like Norway, Canada and Denmark are likely to make use of their advantageous geographic positions to influence the near abroad. They are also concerned with upholding regional and global governance mechanisms (hereunder international law) that ensure stability and cooperation in the North and are eager to avoid the Arctic getting dragged into global rivalries or conflicts originating elsewhere.

In any case, it appears that Norway will continue to pursue an active role in the North, regardless of changes in government or further deterioration of Arctic regional relations. That prediction comes from the simple fact that almost 10% of Norway's population and much more of its economic and resource potential lie north of the Arctic Circle: the region is not a periphery the same way that Alaska or Greenland are vis-à-vis Washington DC or Copenhagen. The Arctic is integral to Norwegian economic and security concerns, which Norway's Arctic policy in recent decades has both contributed to and been a consequence of. Norway's entry into the UN Security Council (from 2021 until 2023) and its increased engagement with global ocean politics are also linked to its Arctic policy priorities.

The idiom 'High North, low tension' still very much describe how Norway would prefer Arctic relations to be – especially vis-à-vis its Russian neighbor. Whether this



description will continue to apply is up for debate. Military activity in the form of exercises and – at times– provocative maneuvers in the Barents Sea is nothing new to that part of the world. What has changed is how that activity is being interpreted and how certain political leaders make symbolic statements about Arctic geopolitics. The worry, however, is that such hype might spur further increases in military activity and thus fuel the very race that leaders are fearful of. Due to its role as both a NATO member and Russia’s neighbor, Norway in particular has a special responsibility to convey a cooler message while also continuing to encourage cooperative measures in the North, especially in the domain of security politics.

**“Norwegian Officials: Russian Arctic Expansion Making Security Landscape ‘Difficult’,” John Grady, USNI News, 22 March 2021 [196]**

<https://news.usni.org/2021/03/22/norwegian-officials-russian-arctic-expansion-making-security-landscape-difficult>

Overview:

Russia’s heavy investment in new ballistic missile submarines and long-range precision strike weaponry signal the Kremlin’s will to challenge NATO’s ability to reinforce the High North in a crisis, Norway’s top diplomat said Friday.

“The security landscape is getting more difficult,” Ine Ericksen Soreide said at The Atlantic Council on Friday.

Russia has built up a military presence in the Arctic over the last 10 years and deployed advanced strategic weapons, including submarines and missiles. The Kremlin also has built new air bases, giving its air force a longer reach into the Atlantic.

Current & Relevant Information:

Norway “is the only NATO member bordering Russia,” so it is monitoring the military build-up and increased civilian economic development on the other side of the border closely, according to Frank Bakke-Jensen, Norway’s minister of defense. Adding another dimension to military changes in the Arctic, he identified the Barents Sea as “optimal to test new weapons systems” for Russia’s armed forces.

Norway is “NATO’s eyes and ears to the North,” Soreide, who previously served as defense minister, added. She also noted that Norway is different from other Arctic nations with its ice-free waters, caused by the flow of the Gulf Stream from North America across the Atlantic, making it strategically important geographically.

Russia shares both land and water borders with Norway. Historically, “we meet Russia with firmness and predictability,” Soreide said. But ever since 2014, when Moscow seized the Crimea region from Ukraine, Oslo has been more wary of the Kremlin’s intentions across Europe. It also cut off direct exchanges between the two militaries at the time.

“If we don’t stand up to that [overt aggression as in Crimea and eastern Ukraine], who will?” she questioned, referring both to economic sanctions levied on Russian businesses and individuals and a renewed commitment to security spending in the alliance.

#### Social Issues:

**“These are the most important issues for Norwegian people in 2019,” The Local, 26 November 2019 [197] <https://www.thelocal.no/20191126/climate-is-number-one-issue-for-norways-voters/>**

#### Overview:

Climate change is at the top of the list of the most important political issues in Norway, the first time it has been the highest priority for voters in the country. A total of 49 percent said in a recent survey that they believe that climate change is one of the three biggest challenges Norway faces, according to the wide-ranging questionnaire, Klimabarometeret 2019, conducted by data research company Kantar.

#### Current & Relevant Information:

The survey placed climate change at the top of the list of the 14 most important political issues in Norway, VG reports.

Number two on the list is healthcare, which was named by 45 percent of those surveyed, with immigration and integration in third place at 35 percent.

Climate change has never previously topped the survey, which has been carried out in each of the last 10 years.

The issue is high on Norway’s political agenda after a year of massive demonstrations in a number of European countries, led by Swedish activist Greta Thunberg and her school strike for climate movement.

The proportion of respondents who view climate as one of the most important issues has increased by 11 percentage points in the last 6 months, VG writes.

The results also show that there is a generational difference in response patterns to the survey.

People under the age of 45 cite climate change as their most important issue, while those over 45 are most concerned with health care.

Kantar notes that many people come into contact with the health care system later in life, and that this be evidence that people express their own immediate needs in how they respond to the survey.

Political differences are also evident, meanwhile. 88 percent of people who vote for the Norwegian Green Party said that climate is one of the most important issues.

The share is 80 percent for Socialist Left voters, 69 percent for (center-right) Liberal voters and 65 percent for (leftist) Red voters.

For the anti-immigration, right-wing Progress Party, only 13 percent of voters in the survey cite climate as one of the three biggest challenges. Instead, the party's voters are concerned with immigration, health, crime and transport.

Government climate policy also received a rebuke in the Kantar survey, VG writes, with many respondents critical of a perceived lack of action on the part of Prime Minister Erna Solberg's administration.

44 percent of respondents said that Norway should spend more money on climate measures, while 18 percent said spending should be reduced.

**“Five things that are wrong with the world's best country,” Roland Hughes, BBC News, 18 December 2015 [198] <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-35124677>**

#### Overview:

Norway is a nice place to live. This information should not come as a shock to anyone.

This week, the UN said Norway is the nicest country in the world to live - for the 12th year in a row.

Its annual Human Development Index, released this week, ranks 188 countries according to life expectancy, education and income or standard of living.

Norway ranked top, and also has one of the highest average wages on the list - some \$62,500 (£41,900) per capita.

For context, this is who came next:

- Australia
- Switzerland
- Denmark
- Netherlands
- Germany/Ireland

The United Kingdom comes 14th, and the US eighth. (We'll bring you the lowest-ranking countries later on.)

But is life in the world's nicest country all it's made out to be? Most of those surveyed, mainly Norwegians, said yes. But, for balance, here are some aspects of Norwegian life that don't tick everyone's boxes.

#### Current & Relevant Information:

## **Taxes, taxes, taxes**

Norway has one of the highest rates of personal income tax in the world, at some 39%. It has been even higher - at 47.5%, but is now dropping.

Having said that, it's lower than the highest rate in the UK. And the US. And France.

## **Drugs**

Norway has the second-highest rate of deaths by drug overdose in Europe - 70 per million, compared to a European average of only 16 per million. Only Estonia has a higher rate, and that is dropping.

The high cost of drugs has been cited in studies as a factor in addicts choosing to inject, rather than smoke, drugs to get a more powerful hit. But Associated Press, in a report last month, said leaders of Norway's two largest cities, Oslo and Bergen, were now looking at radical new policies to solve the problem.

## **Petrol prices**

Petrol prices are also among the top few highest in the world, alongside the Netherlands, Hong Kong and Djibouti - today, the average price for a liter of unleaded petrol is around €1.49 (£1.09; \$1.61).

The reason is those pesky taxes again - but when you bear in mind how much higher the average wage is, the price doesn't appear to be too bad.

## **And the lowest-ranked countries are...**

Right at the bottom is Niger - with 16 other African countries above it (Central African Republic, Eritrea and Chad are directly above Niger). Syria, wracked by more than four years of civil war, is 134th out of 188.

The UN Development Program, which compiled the list, says the average annual income in Niger is \$908 (£605) and children receive, on average, only five years of education.

The US State Department warns against travelling to Niger, saying the country is a target of terror attacks, with al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb especially active.

And on top of that, on Thursday, its president announced a plot to overthrow him in a coup had failed.

But is its status as the world's least live-able country deserved?

"I was very surprised to see Niger at the bottom of the list again," says Elhadji Coulibaly, a Nigerien presenter with BBC Hausa. "I was there last month for the first time since 2009 and I saw a lot of good changes.

"When I was young, in a small town, there was one school. Now there are up to 10. There are lots of roads and flyovers being built, modern houses being built, everything growing like mushrooms.

"I am not saying it is 100% perfect, it's not. But it is changing and this is not a fair reflection."

**"2020 Country Reports on Human Rights Practices: Norway," U.S. Department of State, 3 March 2021 [199] <https://www.state.gov/reports/2020-country-reports-on-human-rights-practices/norway/>**

#### Overview:

Norway is a parliamentary democracy and constitutional monarchy. The government consists of a prime minister, a cabinet, and a 169-seat parliament (Storting), which is elected every four years and may not be dissolved. The monarch generally appoints the leader of the majority party or majority coalition as prime minister with the approval of parliament. Observers considered the multiparty parliamentary elections in 2017 to be free and fair.

The national police have primary responsibility for internal security. Police may call on the armed forces for assistance in crises. In such circumstances the armed forces operate under police authority. The National Police Directorate, an entity of the Ministry of Justice and Public Security, oversees the police force. Civilian authorities maintained effective control over the security forces. Members of the security forces did not commit any abuses.

There were no reports of significant human rights abuses.

The government had mechanisms in place to identify and punish officials who may commit human rights abuses.

#### Current & Relevant Information:

In 2019 the number of hate crimes rose to 278 from 175 in 2016. Hate crimes targeting Muslims rose from 19 to 46 during the same period, and during 2018 and 2019 religious hate crimes were only directed at Muslims, according to police. Media and the Norwegian Center against Racism reported continued anti-Muslim and anti-immigrant sentiment in society. During the summer SIAN held multiple protests that were faced by larger groups of counterdemonstrators. The Center against Racism, other NGOs, and politicians urged individuals not to give SIAN the attention it was seeking.

On June 11, Philip Manshaus was sentenced to 21 years in prison for the attempted terrorist attack on the al-Noor Islamic Cultural Center outside of Oslo and the murder of his stepsister in August 2019. The sentence is the maximum permitted under the law and the strictest ever to be given.

According to NGOs and research institutes, including the University of Oslo, the Institute for Social Research, and the Center against Racism, hate speech on the internet against religious groups continued to be a problem.

On September 23, the government launched its Action Plan against Discrimination of and Hate against Muslims. The four-year plan responds to recent studies showing an increase in negative attitudes towards Muslims in the country, the terrorist attack against the al-Noor Islamic Center, and the increasing threat from right-wing extremists as assessed by the Police Security Service in its annual threat assessment. The plan contains 18 measures focusing on research and education, dialogue across religious communities and police initiatives such as registration of hate crimes towards Muslims as a separate category in the crime statistics.

**“Is Life in Norway as Happy as It's Cracked Up to Be?” Nathan John Albury, U.S. News, 24 July 2017 [200] <https://www.usnews.com/news/best-countries/articles/2017-07-24/is-life-in-norway-as-happy-as-its-cracked-up-to-be>**

#### Overview:

For progressives around the world, it has become almost a pastime to romanticize the quasi-socialist Scandinavian countries. Nations such as Norway, Finland and Sweden are – to many – not only examples of wealth and well-being but also bastions of social progress and tolerance.

Norway, in particular, consistently leads the world in quality of life and happiness, and the country is responding compassionately to the Syrian refugee crisis, unlike its many critics in Europe. But is life in Norway really so great?

I'm not so sure.

As an Australian who worked in Oslo for three years, I found that while freedom, tolerance and happiness are indeed important values there, you can expect to enjoy them only if you're Norwegian.

#### Current & Relevant Information:

##### **You're welcome?**

After the 2011 mass shooting by Anders Breivik, which he carried out in the name of rejecting a "Muslim colonization" of Europe, Norway emerged determined to defy xenophobia.

In 2015, during the height of the European refugee crisis, the country, which has a population of 5.2 million, considered some 31,000 asylum cases, a national record. And in contrast to most European countries, Norway extends full social support and protections to all asylees while they await a ruling.

Still, Norway's far-right Progress Party – to which Breivik belonged in his youth and which holds 29 seats in parliament – has fought to roll back migration and benefits.

Since 2015, Integration Minister Sylvi Listhaug has pursued aggressive restrictions on immigration, particularly for Muslims. As a result, the country deported a record number of migrants in 2016, including minors between the ages of 16 and 18, as per new restrictions.

### **A history of exclusion**

His fear-mongering taps into a dark strain of Norwegian history. As recently as 1977, the Norwegian government forcibly sterilized members of its Romani minority population.

Such policies also echo Norway's treatment of its indigenous population, which I have been studying. Indeed, it seems forgotten in post-colonial societies that Norwegian history is blighted with atrocities against the native Sámi.

Until the second half of the 20th century, the Norwegian government forcibly seized Sámi lands in middle and northern Norway and sought to eradicate Sámi culture. A policy of Norweginisation, known as "fornorsking," meant that Sámi children were sent to Norwegian boarding schools, where they were beaten for speaking their native language.

The Sámi were also denied the right to purchase property if they could not speak Norwegian. Today, Sámi people are still suppressed by Norwegian policy and experience ten times more discrimination than ethnic Norwegians.

Many Sámi live throughout the country, and though their right to an education in Sámi and to the use of their language for public purposes has now been recognized, these rights are enjoyed only in small municipalities in the rural north that have been designated as Sámi territories.

Generally speaking, to participate in Norway's society and economy, you must forgo being and speaking Sámi.

While popular and even academic writing in Norway describes immigrants from the Middle East as speaking "kebab Norwegian," my 2016 analysis of online comments to Sámi-themed news found a similarly pervasive prejudice.

The analysis shows that Norwegians argue that the Sámi threaten the purity of Norwegian ethnicity and way of life. Some say Sámi cannot be seen as Norwegian citizens, do not deserve indigenous status and have invented their historic oppression.

In another display of discrimination, when Tromsø, the major town of the far north, considered designating itself a Sámi zone, opposing voices were filled with hate. Opponents even fired bullets at bilingual signs to express displeasure.

**“How Climate Change Is Going To Impact Norway,” David Nickel, Life in Norway, 9 August 2019 [201] <https://www.lifeinnorway.net/how-climate-change-is-going-to-impact-norway/>**

Overview:

More rainfall, flooding, landslides, power outages, and loss in mobile phone reception. That's what's in store for Norway according to a new climate report.

It's been only a few days since intense rainfall led to severe landslides in western Norway, killing one person. That event came just days after temperatures hit an all-time high in the region.

The Norwegian Red Cross believes that more and more extreme weather events will increasingly threaten human life in the future. “This summer's deadly and devastating landslides and last year's drought and devastating floods have shown us that both the authorities and volunteer emergency organizations must sharpen our work on prevention and preparedness across the country,” says Secretary General Bernt G. Apeland.

Current & Relevant Information:

**Norway's climate 2071-2100**

His comments come as a new report commissioned by the organization on Norway's climate in the years 2071-2100 makes for grim reading. The organization asked the Norwegian Climate Services Centre to investigate the impact on Norway if the world's greenhouse gas emissions continue to rise.

Together with researchers from NVE and the Meteorological Institute, the team outline detailed climate projections on a regional basis. The results were presented during Arendalsuka this week.

**Massive changes in Svalbard**

Perhaps the most worrying projections come for those living on Svalbard. The Arctic archipelago is already feeling the impact of climate change with record temperatures and unusual winter rainfall causing avalanches and killing reindeer.

Now researchers predict that the average temperature can rise by as much as 8.7C by 2100. Such a change will transform Svalbard as we know it. Heavy winter rainfall will become normal, while the risk of permafrost thawing, snowmelt floods, avalanches and landslides will increase dramatically.

**Major impact in all regions**

But it's not just Svalbard at risk. The report warns that every Norwegian county can expect more heavy rainfall and storms, raising the risk of flooding and landslides.



Coastal areas will experience higher sea levels and higher levels during storm surges. Permafrost will melt. The risk of drought, forest fire, snow avalanches and landslides will increase in almost all areas of the country.

NVW Hydrologist Irene Brox Nilsen says municipalities must put a major climate focus in all forms of planning and development. "Local climate conditions have always affected where we settle. Municipalities must take climate change into account when planning residential areas and infrastructure. Areas that do not have a significant risk of natural damage today may have it in the future," she warns.

The Norwegian Red Cross asks all municipalities to make sure they have good contingency plans. They recommend preventative work should start already.

"It is crucial that all municipalities agree contingency plans and regularly practice crisis management with voluntary contingency players as well. Authorities need to have a particular focus on vulnerable groups such as the elderly and other groups in the population. They may not be able to prepare for crises or get to safety when the accidents occur," says Apeland.

### **Preparing for the impact of climate change**

Rainfall in western Norway is hardly unusual, and most locals will consider themselves well prepared to deal with it. But intense rain in a confined area creates different problems. The authors of the report warn particularly of landslides like we saw in Jølster earlier in the year.

Apeland notes this in the report's introduction. "You and I must take greater responsibility for our personal preparedness. That is, to prepare ourselves for the loss of power and water for several days, for mobile networks to stop working, or for food availability to become restricted," he writes.

**"Norway," Douglas Caulkins, Countries and their Cultures [2021]**  
<https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Norway.html>

#### Overview:

The name Norge ("the Northern Way") originally pertained to a region of the country before political consolidation under Harald the Fair-Haired around 900 C.E. In later use, the country's name indicates its location on the northern periphery of Europe. Some of the northerly sections of the country are home to at least two main groups (coastal and mountain) of an indigenous population of Sami (previously called Lapps) with a separate language and distinct cultural traditions. Some groups of Sami practice reindeer nomadism and range across northern Sweden and Finland. A smaller Gypsy population also was part of the otherwise homogeneous population. For humanitarian reasons, in the late twentieth century, the country welcomed asylum seekers and immigrants from other countries. Norwegians have an acute sense of identity fostered by a nineteenth century national romantic movement and

by the country's emergence in 1905 as an independent constitutional monarchy. The small scale of Norwegian society, with a population of little more than four million, also promotes cultural sharing.

#### Current & Relevant Information:

### **Social Welfare and Change Programs**

After 1945, the National Insurance Scheme was developed to manage and allocate resources for health, old age, disabilities, widows, widowers, children, and single parents. Approximately 15 percent of government expenditures are for health services. Nongovernmental organizations play an important role in supplementing this welfare system in partnership with the government. Special attention is given to organizations that support disadvantaged citizens through subsidies granted by local governments.

### **Medicine and Health Care**

Norway is one of the healthiest countries in the world, with an average life expectancy of nearly seventy-eight years. Modern medicine replaced folk medical beliefs in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Currently, there are over fifteen thousand doctors and nearly sixty thousand nurses. The compulsory National Insurance Scheme provides free hospital care and modest charges for medicines and primary care. Approximately 15 percent of government expenditures go for health care.

#### F. Russia:

**“Satellite images show huge Russian military buildup in the Arctic,” Nick Paton Walsh, CNN, 5 April 2021 [203] <https://www.cnn.com/2021/04/05/europe/russia-arctic-nato-military-intl-cmd/index.html>**

#### Overview:

Russia is amassing unprecedented military might in the Arctic and testing its newest weapons in a region freshly ice-free due to the climate emergency, in a bid to secure its northern coast and open up a key shipping route from Asia to Europe.

Weapons experts and Western officials have expressed particular concern about one Russian 'super-weapon,' the Poseidon 2M39 torpedo. Development of the torpedo is moving fast with Russian President Vladimir Putin requesting an update on a "key stage" of the tests in February from his defense minister Sergei Shoigu, with further tests planned this year, according to multiple reports in state media.

#### Current & Relevant Information:

Unmanned stealth torpedo is powered by a nuclear reactor and intended by Russian designers to sneak past coastal defenses -- like those of the US -- on the sea floor.

The device is intended to deliver a warhead of multiple megatons, according to Russian officials, causing radioactive waves that would render swathes of the target coastline uninhabitable for decades.

In November, Christopher A Ford, then assistant secretary of state for International Security and Non-Proliferation, said the Poseidon is designed to "inundate U.S. coastal cities with radioactive tsunamis."

Experts agree that the weapon is "very real" and already coming to fruition. The head of Norwegian intelligence, Vice Admiral Nils Andreas Stensønes, told CNN that his agency has assessed the Poseidon as "part of the new type of nuclear deterrent weapons. And it is in a testing phase. But it's a strategic system and it's aimed at targets ... and has an influence far beyond the region in which they test it currently." Stensønes declined to give details on the torpedo's testing progress so far.

Satellite images provided to CNN by space technology company Maxar detail a stark and continuous build-up of Russian military bases and hardware on the country's Arctic coastline, together with underground storage facilities likely for the Poseidon and other new high-tech weapons. The Russian hardware in the High North area includes bombers and MiG31BM jets, and new radar systems close to the coast of Alaska.

The Russian build-up has been matched by NATO and US troop and equipment movements. American B-1 Lancer bombers stationed in Norway's Ørland air base have recently completed missions in the eastern Barents Sea, for example. The US military's stealth Seawolf submarine was acknowledged by US officials in August as being in the area.

A senior State Department official told CNN: "There's clearly a military challenge from the Russians in the Arctic," including their refitting of old Cold War bases and build-up of new facilities on the Kola Peninsula near the city of Murmansk. "That has implications for the United States and its allies, not least because it creates the capacity to project power up to the North Atlantic," the official said.

### **Russia insists motives are peaceful and economic**

Russia's foreign ministry declined to comment, yet Moscow has long maintained its goals in the Arctic are economic and peaceful.

A March 2020 document by Kremlin policymakers presented Russia's key goals in an area behind 20% of its exports and 10% of its GDP. The strategy focuses on ensuring Russia's territorial integrity and regional peace. It also expresses the need to guarantee high living standards and economic growth in the region, as well as developing a resource base and the NSR as "a globally competitive national transport corridor."

Putin regularly extols the importance of Russia's technological superiority in the Arctic. In November, during the unveiling of a new icebreaker in St. Petersburg, the Russian President said: "It is well-known that we have a unique icebreaker fleet that holds a leading position in the development and study of Arctic territories. We must reaffirm this superiority constantly, every day."

Putin said of a submarine exercise last week in which three submarines surfaced at the same time in the polar ice: "The Arctic expedition ... has no analogues in the Soviet and the modern history of Russia."

Among these new weapons is the Poseidon 2M39. The plans for this torpedo were initially revealed in an apparently purposeful brandishing of a document discussing its capabilities by a Russian general in 2015.

It was subsequently partially dismissed by analysts as a 'paper tiger' weapon, meant to terrify with its apocalyptic destructive powers that appear to slip around current treaty requirements, but not to be successfully deployed.

Yet a series of developments in the Arctic -- including, according to Russian media reports, the testing of up to three Russian submarines designed to carry the stealth weapon, which has been suggested to be 20 meters long -- have now led analysts to consider the project real and active.

Russia's state news agency, RIA Novosti, cited a "source" on Monday saying that tests for the Belgorod submarine, especially developed to be armed with the Poseidon torpedo, would be completed in September.

Manash Pratim Boruah, a submarine expert at Jane's Fighting Ships, said: "The reality of the weapon is clear. You can absolutely see development around the torpedo, which is happening. There is a very good probability that the Poseidon will be tested, and then there is a danger of it polluting a lot. Even without a warhead, but definitely with just a nuclear reactor inside."

Boruah said some of the specifications for the torpedo leaked by the Russians were optimistic and doubted it could reach a speed of 100 knots (around 115 miles per hour) with a 100MW nuclear reactor. He added that at such a speed, it would probably be detected quite easily as it would create a large acoustic signature.

"Even if you tone it down from the speculation, it is still quite dangerous," he said.

Boruah added that the construction of storage bays for the Poseidon, probably around Olenya Guba on the Kola Peninsula, were meant to be complete next year. He also expressed concerns about the Tsirkon hyper-sonic missile that Russia says it has tested twice already, which at speeds of 6 to 7 Mach would "definitely cause a lot of damage without a particularly having big warhead itself."

Katarzyna Zysk, professor of international relations at the state-run Norwegian Institute for Defence Studies, said the Poseidon was "getting quite real," given the level of infrastructure development and testing of submarines to carry the torpedo.

"It is absolutely a project that will be used to scare, as a negotiation card in the future, perhaps in arms control talks," Zysk said. "But in order to do so, it has to be credible. This seems to be real."

Stensønes also raised the concern that testing such nuclear weapons could have serious environmental consequences. "We are ecologically worried. This is not only a theoretical thing: in fact, we have seen serious accidents in the last few years," he said, referring to the testing of the Burevestnik missile which was reported to have caused a fatal nuclear accident in 2019. "The potential of a nuclear contamination is absolutely there."

**"Dark Arctic: NATO allies wake up to Russian supremacy in the region," Jacob Gronholt-Pedersen and Gwladys Fouche, Reuters, 16 November 2022 [204]**

<https://www.reuters.com/graphics/ARCTIC-SECURITY/zgvobmbblrpd/>

#### Overview:

The world's largest satellite ground station, on the Svalbard archipelago off Norway, is used by Western space agencies to gather vital signals from polar-orbiting satellites. This January, one of two fiber-optic cables on the Arctic seabed connecting Svalbard to the mainland was severed. Norway was forced to rely on a back-up link.

In April 2021, another cable – one used by a Norwegian ocean research laboratory to monitor activity on the Arctic seafloor – was ripped away.

"This could have happened by accident," Norway's defense chief Eirik Kristoffersen told Reuters in response to the ruptures, which received little media coverage outside Norway. "But the Russians are capable of cutting cables."

He was speaking generally and did not offer any evidence to suggest deliberate damage, but months later, in September, saboteurs caused major leaks to suddenly erupt in gas pipelines from Russia to Europe on the floor of the Baltic Sea. Russia's defense ministry did not respond to a request for comment.

As Russia's invasion of Ukraine ends a post-Cold War era of low tension and cooperation, such events highlight how hard it is for states to monitor their own waters – particularly in the Arctic, an ocean one and a half times the size of the United States, where satellites are crucial to allow real-time detection and monitoring of activity.

Over recent years, NATO allies and Russia have scaled up military exercises in the region; Chinese and Russian warships conducted a joint exercise in the Bering Sea in September. Norway raised its military alert level in October.

But the West trails Russia in military presence.

Since 2005, Russia has reopened tens of Arctic Soviet-era military bases, modernized its navy, and developed new hypersonic missiles designed to evade U.S. sensors and defenses.

#### Current & Relevant Information:

Four Arctic experts say it would take the West at least 10 years to catch up with Russia's military in the region, if it chose to do so.

"The Arctic is currently a dark area on the map," said Ketil Olsen, formerly Norway's military representative in NATO and the European Union, who heads Andoeysa Space, a Norwegian state-controlled company that tests new military and surveillance technologies and launches research rockets.

"It's so vast and with few civilian surveillance resources."

The chief of the U.S. Northern Command, General Glen VanHerck, told a Senate hearing in March the United States needed better Arctic "domain awareness" to detect and address Russian and Chinese capabilities to launch advanced missiles and destroy communications infrastructure. In a Pentagon strategy document released in October, the United States committed to improving early warning and surveillance systems in the Arctic, but the pace of the planned modernisation is unclear.

At the same time, fast-rising temperatures are creating problems for some U.S. military infrastructure built on permafrost foundations, which are melting. Coastal erosion could also impact U.S. radar sites, the Pentagon says.

There are few risks in the near term, U.S. officials and military analysts say: The West is far stronger than Russia in conventional forces and Russia's limited success in Ukraine exposed weaknesses many in the West had not expected.

Russia's military efforts are currently mostly focused on Ukraine, leaving "very limited strength of personnel on the army side" in the Arctic Kola Peninsula, which is home to its Northern Fleet navy and nuclear submarines, according to Kristoffersen.

U.S. missile defenses are designed to defend against a limited attack from a rogue state, and the United States has expressed confidence in its ability to deter a nuclear attack by Russia or China. But insufficient visibility in the Arctic could limit U.S. response time in a crisis, a situation VanHerck and other officials want to avoid.

"What you can't see and what you can't determine, you can't defend from," VanHerck told the Senate.

Police investigating the Norwegian cable ruptures interviewed the crew of Russian fishing trawlers that had been nearby, but dropped the investigations without charge

for lack of evidence of what happened; the government said it brought forward a planned upgrade of the back-up line.

If a sabotage attack were to happen in Norway, it would likely be difficult to hold anyone accountable for it, Hedvig Moe, deputy head of Norway's PST police security service, told Reuters. "We call it a deniable attack in our world," she said.

"NATO is increasing its presence in the Arctic with more modern capabilities," NATO chief Jens Stoltenberg told Reuters. "This is of course a response to what Russia is doing. They have significantly increased their presence ... and therefore we also need greater presence."

**"Russia in the Arctic—A Critical Examination," Eugene Rumer, Richard Sokolsky, and Paul Stronski, Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 29 March 2021**  
[205] <https://carnegieendowment.org/2021/03/29/russia-in-arctic-critical-examination-pub-84181>

#### Summary:

Russia's Arctic ambitions have attracted increasing attention in the West over the past decade as climate change opens up new opportunities in the region for navigation and exploration of its riches. For its part, Moscow casts a wary eye on what it sees as a challenge from the United States and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) to its position and ambitions there. The Kremlin's rhetoric about Western encroachment has become more strident, in sync with its enhanced military posture and ambitious economic and infrastructure projects.

#### **The Drivers of Russia's Arctic Policy**

Russian interest in the Arctic has deep historic roots that extend all the way to the sixteenth century and the conquest of Siberia driven by the never-ending quest for more resources and secure trading routes. Modern-day Russian posture in the Arctic is integral to its overall confrontation with the West, in which Europe is the principal theater. The saber-rattling in the Arctic and threatening rhetoric are driven by several factors: preparations for the unlikely, but potentially catastrophic contingency of war in Europe, the need to secure its second-strike nuclear capabilities (the bulk of which is based around the Kola Peninsula), and the quest for resources to pay for the proverbial guns and butter as the competition with the West shows no sign of abating. Great-power ambitions and the interests of powerful bureaucratic elites and business interests also play a role.

#### **Ambitions vs. Reality**

It remains to be seen whether Russia will be successful in realizing these ambitions. Its nuclear and conventional naval forces in northwest Russia are increasingly vulnerable to NATO's long-range precision weapons. It is unclear whether the development of the Northern Sea Route (NSR) along Russia's northern coastline

into a major shipping route between Europe and Asia and the associated commercial projects are feasible and sustainable in the face of high costs and logistical complexity of operating in difficult climatic conditions with limited infrastructure, increased commercial competition from other countries, uncertain demand for hydrocarbons as the world shifts to green technologies, and the possibility of additional Western sanctions. The Kremlin's posture in the Arctic is likely to continue as it enjoys backing from President Vladimir Putin and top military, government, and business actors. Its ability to achieve these broad ambitions for the region, however, is questionable at best.

### **Implications for the United States and NATO**

Russia's conception of its security requirements and NATO's mutual-defense and deterrence commitments on the other hand have resulted in a tense standoff along the alliance's northern flank as their forces operate in close proximity. Tempting as it may be to view the Arctic through the prism of great-power competition—which undoubtedly would fit with Russia's quest for recognition as a great power—there is little to suggest that its military posture in the Arctic is a fundamentally new undertaking. Rather, it signals the return to a version of its Cold War-era posture centered around long-standing missions of protecting the sanctuaries of its ballistic missile submarine fleet and operations in the North Atlantic in the event of a war in Europe. Yet the Russian military is resuming these missions with fewer resources and facing a more formidable array of adversary capabilities than during the Cold War.

Russia has staked out ambitious territorial claims in the Arctic. Its rhetoric notwithstanding, it has thus far pursued them through legal means in compliance with the terms of the United Nations (UN) Convention on the Law of the Sea, which it has signed and ratified.

Russia's actions in the Arctic—its aggressive rhetoric and its far-reaching territorial claims—have done little to improve its diplomatic position there vis-à-vis other Arctic states and only antagonized them. Its only partner in its Arctic pursuits has been China, which claims that it is a “near-Arctic” state—a claim rejected by the United States and likely viewed with suspicion by other Arctic nations.

Considering the long-term nature of Russia's confrontation with the West, the return to the relatively benign geopolitical environment in the Arctic that existed there in the 1990s is unlikely. Moreover, the current situation is not due to a misunderstanding, but rather to a clash of the two parties' interests. That leaves two broad avenues for managing the standoff:

- **Diplomacy:** Although Russia may not prove receptive, the United States and NATO should seek areas of cooperation where there is a convergence of interests, as well as to devise rules of the road similar to those that existed during



the Cold War to reduce tensions, avoid or manage crises, and mitigate the risks of conflict through an accident or miscalculation.

- **Deterrence:** The United States and NATO should continue to improve their defenses to discourage Russia from harassing their military and commercial aircraft and ships in and around the Arctic, and to ensure that the alliance maintains the capability to execute its wartime reinforcement plans for its northern and eastern flanks.

The alliance should continue to manage competition with Russia through a combination of resolve and restraint, improving and demonstrating its capabilities for defense and deterrence, but without overreacting to Russian muscle-flexing. Striking the right balance will be difficult and will require communicating to Russia clearly where the allies' interests, objectives, and redlines are. The allies have been there before.

#### Current & Relevant Information:

### **Introduction**

During the first post–Cold War decade, Russia approached the Arctic as an area of low tensions, where cooperation with other powers in addressing common challenges was desirable and feasible.<sup>1</sup> Gradually, however, as relations with the West deteriorated, and especially since its 2014 invasion of Ukraine, Russia has adopted a much more competitive, even confrontational, perspective on the Arctic. Instead of emphasizing the benefits of cooperative engagement, its leaders have articulated their view of the Arctic as a sphere of military and economic expansion, and an arena for their great-power ambitions.<sup>2</sup> As a result of this changing attitude, Moscow has prioritized military superiority to counter what it claims is a growing U.S./NATO challenge to its interests there.

By any objective standard, U.S./NATO military deployments in the Arctic do not currently represent a threat to Russia's Northern Fleet or to its other military assets there. The region possesses an abundance of natural resources, especially oil and gas, but these are available elsewhere in Russia. Exploring and extracting them in the Arctic requires huge capital investments and modern technology that would stretch its capacity. Global warming is opening up new commercial opportunities for shipping and fishing, but there is scant infrastructure in the region to capitalize on these opportunities, and rectifying this deficiency will be costly.

Russia's evolving Arctic ambitions have engendered growing concerns among other Arctic nations, yet surprisingly little is known about the basis for these ambitions. This paper therefore addresses the following questions: What are the drivers of Russia's Arctic policy? How does it define its interests in the region and what tools does it employ to advance them? Who are the Russian stakeholders that would benefit from the exploitation of the region? What are the prospects for Russia

realizing its ambitions? What are the implications of its actions and ambitions for U.S./NATO interests and policy?

## **Conclusion**

In responding to Russia's ambitions in the Arctic, it is important for the United States and NATO to base their plans on a realistic assessment of its posture there, its drivers, and its capabilities. Tempting as it may be to view the Arctic through the prism of great-power competition—which undoubtedly would fit with Russia's quest for recognition as a great power—there is little to suggest that its military posture in the Arctic is a fundamentally new undertaking. Rather, it signals the return to a version of its Cold War-era posture centered around long-standing missions of protecting the sanctuaries of its ballistic missile submarine fleet and operations in the North Atlantic in the event of a war in Europe. The Russian military is resuming these missions with fewer resources and facing a more formidable array of adversary capabilities than during the Cold War.

Some hedging against a greater-than-anticipated Russian threat should be one element of the United States' and NATO's overall approach to the Arctic Region. But pursuing the goal of winning a great-power competition with Russia in this region is likely to be a distraction from other, more important U.S. pursuits. The alliance should act with prudence, realism, and restraint in protecting its core interests in the Arctic and carefully manage competition with Russia to avoid destabilizing consequences.

Even though their tense standoff is likely to continue, some cooperation between Russia and other Arctic nations, in practical areas that are largely depoliticized, is probably possible. These include climate change, search and rescue operations, and scientific research. Other opportunities for cooperation should be explored on issues of common concern, such as the safety of maritime shipping, environmental remediation, protection of fisheries, and incident management. In addition, it is essential for NATO allies to find potential diplomatic avenues for managing the standoff—that is, rules of the road to mitigate the risks of crises or incidents with the potential for escalation.<sup>74</sup> No matter how unpromising they may seem, they should be explored. The allies have been here before.

**“Russia’s Tough Talk on Arctic Sovereignty Must Be Taken Seriously,” Alexander Dalziel, *Geopolitical Monitor*, 4 March 2024 [206]**

<https://www.geopoliticalmonitor.com/russias-tough-talk-on-arctic-sovereignty-must-be-taken-seriously/>

### Overview:

As the Russian invasion of Ukraine enters its third year, its implications for the geopolitics of the Arctic continue to unfold.

Although a military conflict is unlikely, Russia's ambitious plans for the Arctic force the region's other states to reconsider Russian thinking about how to manage potential points of tension. The Arctic Ocean's continental shelves are one such issue.

#### Current & Relevant Information:

At a December public forum in St. Petersburg, Admiral Nikolay Yevmenov, head of the Russian navy, spoke of a "full-scale development beyond the 200-mile limit" of the Russian Exclusive Economic Zone in the Arctic Ocean. What I am translating as "development" here is the Russian word *освоение*, a word that bears multiple translations, extending from development to mastery to expansion, often with an economic angle. Elsewhere, it is translated as "[take-over](#)" or "[expansion](#)." The context in which he spoke it was in relation to the Arctic as a "strategic resource base" of economic development.

In his remarks, Yevmenov closely ties that economic development to the defense of sovereignty and territorial integrity in relation to that resource base, displaying how closely national security, defense and economics are intertwined in Russian economic thinking about the Arctic.

His words were fully in line with the body of strategic thinking that the Russian Federation under President Vladimir Putin has established since 2020. What we find in them does not sit comfortably with the concept of an "A5" of Arctic Ocean littoral states working together to settle jurisdictional questions diplomatically, a concept captured in [the 2008 Ilulissat Declaration](#) signed by Canada, the Kingdom of Denmark (for Greenland), Norway, Russia and the United States.

A careful unpacking of Russia's evolving approach to international law and relations in the Arctic is in order.

First, we should take a step back to look at what is at stake. Demarcating the jurisdictional map of the far northern continental shelf has so far been largely a matter of science, in accordance with requirements the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea. Briefly put, its [Article 76](#) permits a country to extend past its 200-mile exclusive economic zone to the margins of the continental shelf should it be demonstrated its physical characteristics are continuous. That demarcation comes with rights to exploit resources in that expanded zone.

Canada, Denmark and Russia have all submitted the data underlying their respective claims to the UN's [Commission on the Limits of the Continental Shelf](#), which rules on the integrity of the science. (The United States, not a signatory to the Law of the Sea, released its claim in fall 2023.) The commission ruled in 2023 that most of [Russia's submission was valid](#). Canada's and Denmark's claims are only likely to be pronounced upon later this decade or early next. As of now, Canada,

Denmark and Russia claim some of [the same places in the central Arctic Ocean](#), concentrated along the Lomonosov Ridge.

Once the commission has ruled, a situation may emerge where all three have empirically justified claims to the same part of the shelf. If so, the final jurisdictional boundaries are agreed upon bilaterally. Canada-Denmark negotiations may not be easy, but however cool-minded they are, they will also be more or less amicable, and strictly at the negotiating table. A precedent for that is the settling of boundary disputes on [Hans/Tartupaluk Island](#) and in the Labrador Sea they concluded in 2022.

So, what about Russia? There is good reason to think that Russia will be less than an amicable negotiator and not leave it to the diplomats alone.

Here it is important to look at what the Russian leadership is saying on the matter. Useful resources are its [main strategic documents](#), released over the last four years. The 2023 Foreign Policy Concept, the [2023 amendments](#) to the [2020 Arctic Strategy](#), the 2022 Maritime Doctrine and the 2021 National Security Strategy reveal that Russia indeed thinks that it has a lot at stake. Canada, Denmark and the United States should take these seriously and prepare accordingly.

To start, these documents make clear that the Arctic Ocean and its continental shelves are an integral part of Russia's geopolitics and prosperity. The Russian position is committed to exercising an extended jurisdiction on the Arctic Ocean's continental shelf. Significantly, the National Security Strategy identifies the military's defense of the continental shelf as a priority, a "goal of state security," which dovetails with the document's emphasis on resource exploitation rights as a function of national security and the general priority of the Arctic region in this regard.

The Maritime Doctrine lists the Arctic as the top priority of maritime strategy and is outspoken on Russian interests beyond its exclusive economic zone to the continental shelf and the delimitation of maritime boundaries under international law. The Foreign Policy Concept says that Russia will "step up" (Russian: *активизацию*) the delineating of these borders in a region it identifies as the second most important after the countries of central Asia and eastern Europe, and what it calls the "near abroad."

These statements fit into a process of geopolitical transformation Russia is trying to undertake to turn into a [coastal Eurasian power](#), defined as much by its northern maritime edge as its terrestrial land mass. While the Arctic has long been touted as central to Russian identity, global warming is opening sea lanes that also conveniently enable Russia's pivot to Asia, accelerated by the precarious relations with Europe.

This vision of Arctic coastal Russia is closely tied to its prosperity agenda. The region had already been an important part of economic planning. Now it is coming to

be seen as the linchpin of future economic development. The Maritime Doctrine describes the Arctic Ocean as the only “vital” ocean to national interests, with its socio-economic development a “decisive condition” for future prosperity. Seabed resources on the continental shelf, it claims, are “predetermined” to be essential to alleviating depleted terrestrial deposits (itself a questionable claim).

Into this mix the strategies assess a sharply competitive, sometimes violent international context, including in the Arctic. The strategic documents describe the other Arctic countries as exhibiting varying degrees of hostility to Russia. The Foreign Policy Concept (Section 50.2, for instance), accuses the other Arctic countries of “militarizing” the region — conveniently ignoring Russia’s own steady modernization of its armed forces in its north.

Russia then goes on to state it will “counteract unfriendly states’ ... militarization of the region.” The United States and its allies are pursuing an explicit “containment” strategy and trying to limit its access to the oceanic resources, according to the Maritime Doctrine; it goes on to say the Arctic is a place of “strategic competition.” According to the National Security Strategy, Russia’s Arctic development is being “obstructed” (a reference to sanctions on oil and gas projects). The disparaging epithet of “Anglo-Saxon” is hurled in Canada’s general direction in the Foreign Policy Concept as one of the United States’ henchmen.

The updated Russian Arctic Strategy introduces ambiguity into this overall depiction. It has retained an earlier description of the other Arctic states as “challenges” (Russian: *вызовы*) and did not elevate them to threats (Russian: *угрозы*). While it did [deprioritize the relations with the other Arctic states](#) from the 2020 document and replace them with bilateral, case-by-case relations with any states, the retention of the “challenge” language is almost certainly not an oversight and optimistically might be seen to represent something of an underlying offer to the Arctic community in the case of improved relations, against the hyperbolic accusations of militarization and Anglo-Saxonism in the other strategies. (A workable hypothesis here is that Russia’s long-term concerns in the Arctic include managing a potentially overreaching China, for which having Arctic partners would be decidedly beneficial for Moscow.)

So, will Russia leave the resolution of any disputes over the continental shelves purely to international law? In the Foreign Policy Concept, Russia reaffirms the “special responsibility of the Arctic states” regarding the Law of the Sea, with a specific reference to maritime delimitation” and sustainable development. It clearly has not abandoned international law.

But Putin and his regime see international law differently from the other (liberal and democratic) Arctic states. They import into their claims about international law the array of deeply cynical assumptions about how the world works, captured in the Foreign Policy Concept’s acknowledgement of the “power factor” in current international relations; diplomacy, it contends, is of decreasing effectiveness.

Cynicism, though, does not exclude sincerity. For Russia, international law is an instrument. The starting point from any consideration of the question in Copenhagen, Nuuk, Ottawa and Washington must be Russia's flagrant dismissal of international law by its invasion of Ukraine. Russia is not a country defined by its strict adherence to legality.

Expressing this, the subordination of international law to the national interest is a theme running through the strategic documents. The Foreign Policy Concept declares that delimiting the continental shelf will be done in accordance with international law but "unconditionally" in line with its "national interests" and "sovereign rights;" the amended 2023 Arctic strategy added new language foregrounding national interests.

In addition, doubts about the efficacy of international law pervade these documents. The Arctic Strategy and Maritime Doctrine both speak of a group of unspecified countries, presumably Arctic ones, seeking to revise international agreements along national legislative lines. These statements exhibit the leadership's tendency to use international law instrumentality and see it as malleable to the interests of the "great powers." They have culminated recently in talk (unlikely to be fulfilled) in [Russia about leaving the Law of the Sea](#) entirely.

In short, international law is generated by centers of global power and smaller countries expressing their interests, and balancing them in accordance with power. What the Kremlin is offering when it talks of international law is a framework for discussing national interests, but justice here is not an equally accessible good, instead something that will be decided by the powerful. This is something for Canada and Denmark, in particular, to be attentive to in Arctic matters.

As a consequence, preparedness should be made for a Russia acting superficially in line with international law but covertly seeking to advance its position. The likelihood that Russia will come to open blows over the Arctic is low, but the main threat is not open aggression.

It is to the asymmetric "grey zone" of deniable "hybrid" tools that we should be looking. The strategic documents fully acknowledge the use of force in international affairs, below and above the threshold of open warfare. Notably, in the Foreign Policy Concept it asserts that Russia is the target of a hybrid warfare campaign conducted by the United States and its allies, and the National Security Strategy and Maritime Doctrine provide additional enabling language for asymmetric responses. Reciprocity is a premise of Russian international conduct. These statements provide a clear justification for its use of so-called hybrid or grey zone coercion to achieve policy ends. If it perceives its negotiating position has deteriorated, Russia will be ready to deploy a range of tools, likely to include deniable, coercive ones, below the threshold of open aggression to strengthen its bargaining position.

The strategic documents make clear that Russia is already trying to shape the negotiation space in the Arctic Ocean. If Russia's relations with its Arctic neighbors remain on the same fraught footing that they are now — a near certainty with another six years of Putin about to start this spring — then it will agitate for maximalist outcomes in obtaining its “sovereign rights” in the Arctic Ocean.

Russian claims are unlikely to extend past what they have stated they want. That does not mean that the coercive “grey zone” will not be an active front in maneuvering for a Russia-optimal settlement or that Canadian and Danish or (by extension) U.S. interests are not at risk.

These three countries need to think about this and start to act now. [Acquiring the capabilities](#) that will keep Russia honest at the negotiating table, like icebreakers, submarines, subsea sensors and patrol aircraft, and the infrastructure to support them, takes years. Negotiations in a decades-long time frame will be advanced by establishing a situational awareness that needs to start being built today.

The timelines are long, and we can hope for a different Russia in the next decade or two. But hope, as is often quipped, is not a policy. Canadian, Danish, Greenlandic and U.S. leaders may well face in a decade's time in the Arctic the same aggressive, uncooperative, and bad faith Russia that we face today in Ukraine. Ensuring we are prepared for hardball hybrid behavior from Russia in the Arctic is a matter for today, so we can be ready tomorrow.

#### Social Issues:

**“Russia: Events of 2019,” Human Rights Watch** [207] <https://www.hrw.org/world-report/2020/country-chapters/russia#>

#### Overview:

The human rights situation in Russia continued to deteriorate in 2019. With few exceptions, authorities responded to rising civic activism with bans, repressive laws, and showcase prosecutions. Record numbers of people protested the groundless exclusion of opposition candidates from a local election in Moscow, and authorities responded with an overwhelming show of force, detentions, and rushed criminal prosecutions. The heightened repression spurred a widespread public “freedom for political prisoners” campaign, which led authorities to release several people from jail.

Officials' disregard for public concerns about the environmental and health impacts of waste management projects sparked widespread protests, and the authorities routinely harassed and prosecuted environmental activists.

The government introduced new restrictions to online speech and adopted a law that could allow it to isolate the Russian segment of the internet.



The “foreign agents” law continued to suffocate nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), while authorities unleashed an intimidation campaign against individuals for allegedly defying the law banning “undesirable” foreign organizations.

#### Current & Relevant Information:

### **Freedom of Expression**

In December 2018, President Vladimir Putin signed into law amendments decriminalizing first-time incitement to hatred offenses. Russian authorities often misuse incitement to hatred offences to stifle legitimate protected speech.

Russian authorities continued to use repressive legislation to stifle critical and independent voices online and offline.

In an emerging trend, authorities restricted artistic freedom by canceling numerous rap and pop music performances under the pretext of protecting children from the promotion of drugs, suicide, and homosexuality.

The government continued to curtail internet freedom. Google’s transparency report showed that the total volume of content that the Russian government has requested it to block on YouTube and its other platforms spiked in 2018.

In May, Putin signed a law enabling Russian authorities to partially or fully block access to the internet in Russia, without judicial oversight, in the event of as yet undefined security threats. The law, which partially came into force in November, and at time of writing was due fully in force in January 2021, envisages the creation of a national domain system, providing the government with centralized control of the country’s internet traffic that would enhance its capacity to conduct fine-grain censorship of internet traffic.

Courts issued crippling fines to NGOs and independent media. A massive fine in late 2018 against The New Times magazine, known for its critical coverage of government policies, was for alleged failure to report foreign funding. In October 2018, a court ordered Transparency International Russia to pay a million rubles (US\$15,200) in libel damages to the co-manager of Putin’s 2018 electoral campaign. The same month, an NGO working on drug policy was fined for promoting drug use over an article on how certain drug users can reduce health risks. All three avoided closure by raising money for fines through crowdfunding.

Cases against at least 45 people were opened and courts already issued 23 fines for insulting the authorities, under a March 2019 law that bans dissemination of “fake news” or expressing “blatant disrespect” for the state.

In February, authorities opened a criminal terrorism propaganda investigation against a journalist, Svetlana Prokopyeva, for remarking in a broadcast about a suicide bombing that some government policies might be radicalizing youth. The news outlets that published her comment were also fined.



In May, two veteran reporters with Kommersant, a highly respected news outlet, were pressured into resigning in retaliation for a news story, prompting the entire politics desk to quit. Ivan Golunov, a journalist with the independent outlet Meduza was arrested on bogus drug charges because of his investigative work on high-level corruption. After massive local and international campaigns, authorities released Golunov, dropped the charges, and sacked two high-level police officials. An investigation is ongoing into the attempt to fabricate the case against Golunov.

In November, the Russian parliament passed a new bill enabling authorities to expand the status of “foreign agents” to private persons, including bloggers and independent journalists.

### **Freedom of Religion**

Russian authorities continued to persecute minority religious groups groundlessly designated as “extremist” under Russia’s overly broad counter-extremism law despite no evidence that they espoused or committed violence.

In February, a court in Oryol sentenced Dennis Christensen, a Jehovah’s Witness and a Danish citizen, to six years’ imprisonment on extremism charges. In November, a court in Tomsk handed down the same sentence to another Jehovah’s Witness, Sergei Klimov. At least 285 Jehovah’s Witnesses have been convicted or were facing trial or under investigation in Russia in 2019. Forty-six are in pretrial custody.

Authorities prosecuted on extremism charges members of certain Islamic groups that have no history of incitement or violence. In October 2019, at least two followers of the late Turkish theologian Said Nursi, branded extremist and banned in 2008, continued to serve three-to-eight-year sentences. Four were released in 2019; one of them, Yevgeniy Kim, was stripped of his Russian citizenship after serving almost four years and remained in detention pending deportation since April 2019. Trials on extremism charges were pending against two others.

### **Racial Discrimination and Minority Rights**

Police continued racially profiling people of non-Slavic appearance, often subjecting them to arbitrary detention, and extortion.

National censuses showed a continuing fall, in some cases drastic, in the number of speakers of minority languages. Council of Europe (CoE) experts on national minorities found that policies continue to reinforce dominance of Russian without effective support for minority languages.

In November, authorities ordered the closure of the Center for Assistance to Native Peoples of the North, on a bureaucratic pretext.

**“Russian Events of 2023,” Human Rights Watch, 2024 [208]**  
<https://www.hrw.org/world-report/2024/country-chapters/russia>

## Overview:

In the second year of Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine, Russian authorities have further intensified efforts at home to eradicate any dissent about the war or the Kremlin's domestic policies. They adopted and enforced new, repressive legislation, issued punitively long prison sentences for peaceful anti-war speech, and forcibly closed several prominent human rights groups.

Russia remained the most sanctioned country in the world.

The failed mutiny by the Wagner mercenary group prompted President Vladimir Putin to admit that the group, known for serious human rights abuses in its overseas operations and for recruiting Russian convicts to fight in Ukraine in exchange for amnesty, was fully funded from Russia's budget.

In March, the International Criminal Court issued arrest warrants for Putin and Russian children's rights commissioner Maria Lvova-Belova for the forcible transfer of Ukrainian children from occupied areas of Ukraine and their unlawful deportation to Russia. In response, in April, Russia adopted a law [criminalizing](#) assistance to foreign and international bodies "to which Russia is not a party." For more information on Russian forces' violations of the laws of war in Ukraine, including potential war crimes and crimes against humanity, see Ukraine chapter.

New [laws](#) imposed extensive limitations on rights and access to state services for perceived draft evaders.

## Current & Relevant Information:

### **Freedom of Expression**

Russian authorities continued to use administrative and criminal charges of "discreditation" and "false information" about Russia's armed forces to suppress anti-war speech and prosecute and imprison individuals for their lawful, peaceful expression. According to the human rights group OVD-info, in 2023, at least 77 people were convicted and sentenced on "false information" and 52 on "discreditation" charges; as of October 2023, criminal cases have been opened against over [350 people](#) on these charges. Among them were both prominent opposition figures and people with no background in activism.

In December 2022, a Moscow court [sentenced](#) political opposition figure Ilya Yashin to eight-and-a-half years in prison on "false information" charges. In April 2023, after a year in pretrial detention, another prominent opposition figure, Vladimir Kara-Murza, [received](#) a 25-year sentence in a maximum-security prison on combined charges of treason, "false information," and involvement with an "undesirable organization."

In March, a new law extended "discreditation" and "false information" provisions to cover "volunteers" taking part or "assisting" in armed conflicts.

An April law allowed the authorities to strip naturalized Russian nationals of their citizenship, even if this rendered them stateless, and deport them for committing “discreditation” and “false information” offenses.

Authorities [increasingly used](#) Russia’s “undesirable organizations” legislation to outlaw exiled independent Russian media, including TV Rain, Meduza, The Project, and Novaya Gazeta Europe. Between 2022 and 2023, at least five people were convicted for reposting publications by “undesirable” media.

Russian authorities also increasingly prosecuted people on bogus treason, confidential cooperation, and espionage charges. In March, the Russian Federal Security Service (FSB) [arrested](#) *Wall Street Journal* reporter Evan Gershkovich on espionage charges. At time of writing, he remained in pretrial detention.

In the first half of 2023 alone, the FSB [opened](#) more new treason cases, against a variety of individuals, than in all of 2022. An April law increased the penalties for treason and other crimes.

According to Russian human rights group First Department, in 2023, authorities opened at least 21 criminal cases against people who allegedly engaged in “confidential cooperation” with non-Russian nationals under a law reminiscent of the Soviet-era ban on contact with foreigners.

In October, a journalist with Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty (RFE/RL) (a US government-[funded](#) media organization), Alsu Kurmasheva, was [arrested](#) for [failing](#) to register as a foreign agent while allegedly gathering information on the Russian military for foreign sources. This is the first known application of such charges. She faces up to five years in prison. At time of writing, she remained in pretrial detention.

Russian authorities also used legislation against the rehabilitation of Nazism to suppress legitimate free expression. In January, a Russian publishing house [censored](#) sections of a book by an American author that compared the Soviet army’s conduct in Poland during World War II to that of Nazi Germany.

In November, Russian authorities [opened](#) a criminal case against the local head of an opposition party in Russia’s Kamchatka region for social media posts comparing images of “patriotic” singer Shaman (Yaroslav Dronov) with images of a Nazi youth from the 1972 movie *Cabaret*. He faces up to four years’ imprisonment for display of Nazi symbols. In June, a court in Blagoveschensk, in Russia’s Far East, [fined](#) a former deputy of the local legislative assembly on similar administrative charges for reposting on social media a parody video showing clips from a video by Shaman side by side with a clip from *Cabaret*. Shaman shot to fame after the start of the full-scale invasion of Ukraine with a number of “patriotic” [music video releases](#).

## **Freedom of Assembly**

Freedom of assembly remained effectively defunct. Since 2020 Russian authorities have repeatedly used Covid-19 restrictions as a [pretext](#) to ban opposition and anti-war [protests](#) in the country, despite lifting all other Covid-19 related restrictions and organizing large crowds not adhering to quarantine requirements for pro-Kremlin events, including [concerts](#) in support of Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine. In February, authorities in various regions detained and prosecuted individuals who participated in [sparse protests](#) on the anniversary of Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine.

## **Freedom of Association**

Russian authorities again expanded legislation on “foreign agents” and “undesirable organizations.” They added at least 192 individuals and organizations to the “foreign agents” [registry](#), with the total count reaching 707 as of November 3. At least 44 organizations were banned as “undesirable” in 2023; according to a Russian governmental website, which in some countries outside Russia can be accessed only with certain types of VPNs, the cumulative [count](#) was 116 organizations as of early November.

A December 2022 law streamlined criminal prosecutions for noncompliance with the “foreign agents” law and drastically increased penalties for creating or participating in “destructive” nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), further increasing avenues for authorities to penalize civic activists. In February, Artiom Vajenkov, coordinator of Russia's leading independent election watchdog Golos, [became](#) the first person accused of revised “foreign agent” charges.

Laws adopted in July and August further harshened the “foreign agents” legislation, [outlawed](#) foreign organizations without legal presence in Russia, and criminalized participation in their activities.

In March and April, authorities respectively [banned](#) Transparency International and the EU-Russian Civil Society Forum as “[undesirable](#).”

In August, police [detained](#) Grigoriy Melkonyants, the chair of Golos, and [raided](#) the apartments of several members and perceived affiliates on allegations of continued participation in the European Network of Election Monitoring Organizations despite Golos' departure from the network after it was banned as “undesirable” in 2021. At time of writing, Melkonyants remained in pretrial detention.

## **Attacks on Human Rights Defenders**

Russian authorities continued to harass, intimidate, and prosecute human rights defenders and forcibly shut down human rights groups.

In January, a court [ordered the shutdown](#) of the Moscow Helsinki Group, Russia's oldest human rights group.

In March, police [raided](#) office spaces affiliated with Memorial, one of Russia's most prominent human rights groups that was forcibly shut down in 2021, and the homes of nine of its staff and board members. Earlier in January, the prosecutor's office opened a criminal case against unspecified Memorial members on "justification of Nazism" charges. In October, a court in Moscow [sentenced](#) Oleg Orlov, co-chair of Memorial, to a large fine on "discreditation" charges for a November 2022 social media post on the applicability of the term "fascist" to Russia today. The prosecution [appealed](#) the verdict, seeking his imprisonment.

In April, the Moscow City Court ruled to [liquidate SOVA](#), a watchdog on Russian extremism, on the pretext of holding activities outside Moscow.

In August, a court ordered the closure of the human rights NGO [Chelovek i Zakon](#) (Man and Law) based in the Mari El Republic, following a Justice Ministry lawsuit, on the grounds of operating outside the region where it was registered, non-compliance with "foreign agents" labeling rules, and alleged discrepancies between its activities and aims listed in incorporating documents.

In December 2022, a court [fined](#) the Moscow-based Sakharov Center, a human rights group, 5 million rubles (about US\$50,000) for violating "foreign agents" labeling requirements. In August 2023, another court [ordered](#) its forcible closure following a Justice Ministry lawsuit alleging several violations, including non-compliance with these requirements. In January 2023, authorities [banned](#) the US-registered Andrei Sakharov Foundation as "undesirable."

In July, Russian authorities [banned](#) the Human Rights House Foundation, headquartered in Norway, as "undesirable," making cooperation with it a criminal offence for its Russian partners.

In May, a court [sentenced](#) Bakhrom Khamroyev to 14 years in prison on terrorism-related charges reportedly for social media posts and for preparing materials related to Hizb ut-Tahrir (HuT), a pan-Islamist movement that seeks to establish a caliphate but publicly repudiates violence to achieve that goal. Khamroyev was affiliated with Human Rights Center Memorial and in recent years defended the rights of migrant workers from Central Asia.

### **III-Treatment in Custody**

Russian authorities [subjected](#) at least 40 activists and members of persecuted religious minorities to repeated and extended placement in disciplinary cells, according to a Russian human rights watchdog. They subjected such detainees to other forms of ill-treatment, including incommunicado detention during lengthy transfers from pretrial detention facilities to prisons.

In September, opposition figure Alexei Navalny was [subjected](#) to the maximum disciplinary penalty of one year. Following his arrest in January 2021, he had already been placed in a disciplinary cell at least [20 times](#) for various terms. Prison

authorities also [placed](#) historian and rights advocate Yuri Dmitriyev in a disciplinary cell for 15 days, in spite of his reportedly poor health.

[Despite](#) risks to those with known health conditions, Crimean Tatars serving sentences in Russia for alleged involvement with HuT have also repeatedly been placed for prolonged periods in disciplinary cells. One has spent some [four months in a row](#) in disciplinary cell, and another has cumulatively [spent over two years](#) in disciplinary cells since his conviction in 2019.

In January 2023, Andrey Pivovarov, former executive director of Open Russia, was effectively held in [incommunicado detention](#) for a month during his transfer from pretrial detention to a penitentiary. Russian authorities ignored his lawyer's and family's inquiries about his whereabouts and well-being, a [practice](#) to which the authorities also subjected Vladimir Kara-Murza and numerous others.

## **Chechnya**

Chechen authorities under governor Ramzan Kadyrov continued to eviscerate all forms of dissent, targeting critics and retaliating against their family members, including by [forcibly mobilizing](#) men to fight for Russian forces in Ukraine.

In July, armed men in balaclavas [violently attacked](#) Elena Milashina, a journalist with *Novaya Gazeta*, and Alexander Nemov, a human rights lawyer, who arrived in Grozny to attend a court hearing in the politically motivated case against Zarema Mussaeva. Mussaeva was found guilty and sentenced to several years in prison. Milashina and Nemov suffered a severe beating, resulting in multiple traumas, including fractures. The assailants also threatened to kill them. At time of writing, an investigation was ongoing.

In February, Moscow authorities [arrested](#) Idris Arsamikov, who had previously been tortured in Chechnya for his presumed sexual orientation, on fabricated fraud charges and transferred him to Chechnya. Police in Chechnya refused to disclose his whereabouts or give his lawyers access. Two videos appeared on Arsamikov's VKontakte page, showing him at home denouncing efforts to find him and making other statements that appear to have been forcibly extracted.

In August, a video circulated on social media showing Kadyrov's 15-year-old son beating a suspect detained for destroying the Quran. Kadyrov publicly [expressed](#) approval of his son's actions. In October, the boy received the "Hero of the Chechen Republic" governmental award.

## **Counterterrorism and Counter-Extremism**

In mid-2023, some of Alexei Navalny's former allies received lengthy sentences on bogus extremism and related [charges](#) following closed trials. They included Lilia Chanysheva, who in June was sentenced to 7.5 years in prison in Ufa, Bashkortostan, on extremism and "destructive NGO" charges; her co-defendant,



Rustem Muliukov, who was sentenced to 2.5 years for extremism; and Vadim Ostanin, sentenced to 9 years on the same charge in Barnaul. At time of writing, Kseniya Fadeyeva remained on trial in Tomsk on charges of “aggravated extremism” and participation in a “destructive” organization.

In August, a court [sentenced](#) Navalny to 19 years in a maximum-security prison on spurious extremism and other charges. His co-defendant, Daniel Kholodny, former technical director of Navalny’s YouTube channel, was sentenced to eight years.

In September, several individuals were [arrested](#) on charges of [financing](#) an “extremist” organization for donations to the Navalny-affiliated organization “Foundation Against Corruption.”

In October, three of Navalny’s lawyers were [detained](#) on extremist charges for allegedly facilitating contact between Navalny and his aides and supporters while he remains in jail. They face up to six years in prison.

In June, six activists with the opposition youth movement “Vesna” (“Spring” in Russian) were [detained](#) on various spurious charges, including extremism. In September, authorities [listed](#) 21 Vesna members, including the aforementioned 6, in the registry of “extremists” and “terrorists.” In 2022, Russian authorities [opened](#) several criminal cases against Vesna activists for organizing peaceful protests against Russia’s full-scale invasion of Ukraine. A court banned Vesna as extremist in December 2022 for its legitimate and peaceful civic activism.

In May, authorities [arrested](#) Yevgeniya Berkovich, a theater director, and Svetlana Petriyuchuk, a playwright, on “justification of terrorism” charges for an award-winning play they worked on together about women who became brides of members of Islamic State (also known as ISIS). At time of writing, both [remained](#) in pretrial detention.

Russian authorities opened new criminal cases on charges of justification of terrorism against at least two political prisoners already serving prison sentences, based on their alleged comments to fellow prisoners. In August and October, such cases were opened against [Azat Miftakhov](#) and [Alexei Gorinov](#). Miftakhov was due to be released after [serving a sentence](#) for alleged attempted arson of an empty office of the ruling United Russia party, and Gorinov is serving a seven-year prison sentence for “false information” about Russian forces and for publicly talking about civilian casualties in Ukraine. The new charges may entail up to five years’ imprisonment.

In September, a court [sentenced](#) a Dagestani journalist, Abdulmumin Gadjiyev, to 17 years in a maximum-security prison on 3 spurious terrorism-related charges; his co-defendants received 17.5 and 18 years. Rights organizations [assert](#) the charges were in retaliation for his reporting.

Russian authorities also continued to abuse counter-extremism and counterterrorism legislation to persecute religious minorities. Police raided homes and opened new criminal cases against Jehovah's Witnesses (JWs), banned as "extremist" in Russia since 2017. In 2023, at least 38 JWs were sentenced to up to 7 years in prison and 68 others were sentenced to various penalties not involving imprisonment. Since the 2017 ban, over 410 JWs have spent time behind bars, either awaiting trial or serving a prison sentence.

In 2023, Russian courts continued to issue lengthy prison sentences against people on politically motivated charges of membership in HuT, which was banned as a terrorist organization in Russia in 2003. According to Memorial, as of October 2023, at least [335 people](#) were being prosecuted for alleged HuT affiliation in Russia and occupied Crimea, 115 of whom were sentenced to over 15 years in prison.

Several people were also [sentenced](#), [indicted](#), or [detained](#) for their supposed affiliation with Nurdzhular, a group of followers of the late Turkish theologian Said Nursi that Russia banned as extremist in 2008 even though it has no history of incitement or violence.

Russian authorities also continued to expand counter-extremism legislation. Under a [June law](#), possession or distribution of material that falls under the overly broad and vague legal definition of "extremist" can trigger administrative liability, which can then lead to criminal liability for a repeated offence; previously, liability was triggered by possession or dissemination of materials if they were on the authorities' list of "extremist materials."

### **Climate Change, Environment, and Human Rights**

Watchdogs continued to [report](#) physical attacks, harassment, and prosecution of environmental activists and groups.

Between April and July, authorities banned five environmental groups, including [Greenpeace](#) and the [World Wildlife Fund](#), as "undesirable."

Massive forest fires raged again in different parts of Russia, but the resources allocated by Russian authorities to manage them [reportedly](#) remained insufficient. And local authorities allegedly attempted to underreport the extent of forest fires.

In September, the first-ever "[climate lawsuit](#)" against the Russian government, demanding a radical reduction of Russia's greenhouse gas emissions, was [submitted](#) to the European Court of Human Rights (ECtHR).

### **Migrants, Statelessness, and Xenophobia**

Russian police continued to racially profile non-Slav migrants and [ethnic minorities](#) and subject them to unsubstantiated ID checks and [detentions](#), often prolonged, in inhumane conditions. Some have been [physically assaulted](#).



In July, police [raided](#) mosques in Moscow region under the pretext of immigration checks, interrupting worship and physically assaulting and verbally insulting worshippers.

In some cases, during raids, police [sought out](#) dual Russian nationals among Central Asian migrants and [forcibly delivered](#) them to draft offices. In August, authorities in Kaluga region allegedly [refused](#) to accept naturalization applications from migrant workers unless they signed military service contracts.

Since autumn 2022, Russian authorities have been actively [recruiting](#) Central Asian migrants to sign military contracts, including by luring them with cancellation of deportation orders and simplified naturalization processes or by using [coercion](#) and [deceit](#). In several cases, officials [issued](#) draft notices to Central Asian nationals who do not have Russian passports and cannot be drafted.

In January, a high-ranking official [stated](#) that authorities should prioritize sending dual nationals from Central Asian countries to fight in Ukraine. He later also [proposed](#) stripping naturalized Russian nationals of their citizenship if they refuse to fight in Ukraine. In August, the head of the Russian Presidential Human Rights Council [proposed](#) synchronizing the naturalization procedure with registration at military draft offices.

At time of writing, parliament was considering a [bill](#)—whose official version is available on a Russian governmental website, which in some countries outside Russia can be accessed only with certain types of VPNs—that would allow naturalized citizens to be stripped of their Russian nationality for draft evasion, even if that renders them stateless.

Experts [reported](#) a rise in xenophobic racist attacks by neo-Nazis in the country and noted a [rise](#) in xenophobic anti-migrant rhetoric in [parliament](#), the media, and wider society.

In late October, there were at least four antisemitic incidents in the North Caucasus, including a mob attack in an airport hunting for Israeli passengers. The police detained 201 people for participating in the airport riots and opened a criminal case. However, they have not acknowledged any of the incidents as antisemitic.

### **Online Censorship, Surveillance, and Privacy**

Russian authorities continued to arbitrarily block websites without court orders and further expanded the list of state bodies tasked with doing so. Blocked content included independent media outlets, rights groups, and thousands of websites criticizing Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine.

Authorities also continued tightening control over internet infrastructure. A July [law](#) requires entities providing internet hosting services to enroll in a state registry. In September, [another law](#) entered into force requiring internet exchange

points and telecom operators to install deep packet inspection (DPI) technology in their networks allowing the state to directly filter and reroute internet traffic.

In April, Moscow officials [acknowledged](#) using video surveillance with facial recognition technology to detain alleged [draft evaders](#). Authorities further expanded the use of facial recognition technology, including at [border crossing](#) points and [schools](#).

In December 2022, a personal data leak [confirmed](#) that the Moscow city government failed to secure sensitive personal data of millions of children and parents. In February, a new law [extended](#) compulsory lifetime DNA data collection for millions of people suspected of any crime or convicted of certain misdemeanors. In September, a law [entered into force](#) allowing Russian security services live access to taxi ride data.

### **Key International Actors (see also Ukraine chapter)**

In September, Mariana Katzarova, the first United Nations special rapporteur on human rights in Russia, [presented](#) her first [report](#) to the UN Human Rights Council, outlining the significant deterioration of human rights in Russia since the full-scale invasion of Ukraine in 2022. In October, the UN Human Rights Council voted to extend her mandate for a year.

Throughout the year, UN institutions issued numerous statements on the human rights situation in Russia. The UN high commissioner for human rights expressed [serious concern](#) about Navalny's latest sentence, [condemned](#) Kara-Murza's sentence in April, [expressed](#) deep concern about "foreign agent" and anti-LGBT legislation, and the forced closure of human rights groups and independent media.

Likewise, UN special procedures, individually or jointly, [called](#) for the immediate release of Kara-Murza and [Gershkovich](#), [urged](#) Russia to investigate the attack against Milashina and Nemov, [urged](#) Russia to drop criminal charges against Orlov, [expressed distress](#) over Navalny's gravely deteriorating health and raised concerns about three imprisoned Navalny supporters, and [expressed alarm](#) at Wagner's recruitment of inmates and "[over](#) the escalating crackdown against civil society."

Two UN human rights treaty bodies issued concluding observations on Russia. In April, the UN Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination [expressed](#) deep concern about the unclear definition of "extremist activity" in Russian law and called on Russia to combat racist hate speech, racial hatred, and discrimination. In November 2022, the UN Human Rights Committee [expressed](#) deep concern about rights violations in Ukrainian territories occupied by Russia and about a wide range of other rights issues, many of which were previously outlined in this chapter.

In February, the European Union [imposed](#) further sanctions against the Kremlin-sponsored Wagner mercenary group for serious human rights abuses in the Central African Republic and Sudan alongside sanctions on Wagner mercenaries under the EU's Mali and Ukraine sanctions regimes. In September, the EU [condemned](#) Russia's "elections" in occupied territories of Ukraine as a "violation of international law."

Throughout 2023, the EU issued numerous statements condemning human rights violations in Russia, including the [sentencing](#) of Navalny and [Kara-Murza](#). In July, the EU [urged](#) Russia to drop criminal "discreditation" charges against Orlov. In June and July, the EU Council [announced](#) human rights sanctions against individuals and entities for Kara-Murza sentencing and Navalny's detention and other human rights violations.

The EU [issued](#) several statements expressing solidarity with Russia's independent civil society and [with those](#) who have been persecuted for criticizing Russia's war in Ukraine. The European Parliament also adopted several resolutions condemning Russia's human rights record.

In February, outlining EU priorities in UN human rights fora, the EU Council [condemned](#) violations of international human rights law and international humanitarian law stemming from Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine.

In September, the ECtHR handed down a [ruling](#) in the case of Maxim Lapunov, the only victim of Chechnya's [2017 anti-gay purge](#) who dared seek justice despite great personal risk. The court found that Lapunov was "detained and subjected to ill-treatment by State agents," which "amounted to torture" and was perpetrated "solely on account of his sexual orientation."

In July, the ECtHR [ruled](#) in favor of a Russian national in a case concerning police use of facial recognition technology to prosecute peaceful protesters. The court concluded that using personal data—including from facial recognition technology—to identify and later arrest a protester amounted to an unjustified interference with his private life. It also expressed "strong doubts" as to whether provisions in Russian law provide an appropriate legal basis for processing biometric data.

In October, Russia failed to reclaim a seat on the UN Human Rights Council during a General Assembly election. The General Assembly had suspended Moscow's membership of the council in 2022 due to its full-scale invasion of Ukraine and reported atrocities and rights record at home.

**"Russians Are Increasingly Protesting Social, Not Political Issues – Study," The Moscow Times, 26 June 2019 [\[209\]](#)**

<https://www.themoscowtimes.com/2019/06/26/russians-are-increasingly-protesting-social-not-political-issues-study-a66155>

Overview:

Russians are increasingly likely to rally over social than political issues, according to a newly released study of protests in the first three months of 2019.

Freedom of assembly has been gradually restricted in Russia since a wave of mass protests in 2011-2012 against President Vladimir Putin. Observers say that nonpolitical demonstrations have become more frequent in recent years amid a rise in general discontent.

#### Current & Relevant Information:

More than one-third of 429 rallies in 2019 concerned social issues, the Center for Social and Labor Rights said in a study published Friday. That's almost double the 86 social protests flagged in the same period of 2018.

More than half of the social protests focused on rising trash pickup costs, unpopular retirement age hikes and benefit cuts, the Moscow-based NGO said.

Study author Anna Ochkina said the protests have spread across Russia this year, with residents far outside the country's urban centers now taking to the streets over local and regional issues.

"The geography is now very varied," she told the Kommersant business daily Saturday. "These cities rarely flashed on the map of protest activity two or three years ago."

Environmentalists, defrauded co-investors and other issues-based protesters increasingly prefer not to refer to their actions as political, said Lev Gudkov, the head of Russia's independent Levada Center polling agency.

"It's common conformism stemming from the Soviet era," he told Kommersant.

**"Russia's Social Awakening: A New Challenge for the EU," Barbara Von Ow-Freytag, Carnegie Europe, 18 April 2019 [210]**  
<https://carnegieeurope.eu/strategiceurope/78930>

#### Overview:

Social moods are shifting in Russia, opening up new, exciting opportunities for a reset by the EU in people-to-people contacts. Brussels must not miss this moment.

#### Current & Relevant Information:

Underreported in the West, Russia is inching toward a new social awakening. Putin's famed social contract is collapsing, trust in the president recently reached a thirteen-year low, and nearly half the population sees the country as heading in the wrong direction. Trust in the official state media is also sinking, and a growing number of Russians say they feel a personal responsibility for progress in their country. Even anti-EU attitudes are slowly receding, with the share of Russians who hold a positive view of the EU now at the highest since the annexation of Crimea in 2014.

This wave of discontent is providing a new role and momentum for Russia's civil society. Protests over social issues and civic activism are on the rise, as Russians increasingly mobilize on issues such as pensions, the environment, healthcare, and education. A fresh and tech-savvy activism is taking the lead, presenting new opportunities for European donors to support change and development in Russia.

The catalyst to this momentum has been the subtle but important change in attitudes of Russians over the past year.

A study last May showed an overwhelming 94 percent of Russians saying they no longer rely on the state for any help. Only 7 percent of those polled expressed support for a strong leader, and 80 percent prefer social justice over order—a significant shift since the 1990s. A follow-up survey conducted in October and November 2018 showed that a majority of Russians now clearly favors change over stability and the rule of law over social justice. Crucially, 63 percent also signaled a new appetite for “self-expression” and personal responsibility, such as contributing to charities, volunteering, or social movements.

**“Growing social problems in Russian mono-towns,” Doris Friedrich, High North News, 22 December 2019 [211] <https://www.highnorthnews.com/en/growing-social-problems-russian-mono-towns>**

#### Overview:

Mono-industrial towns, often based on extractive industries, are a feature of many regions in the Arctic. In Russia's Arctic, the creation of mono-towns was one of the pillars of the regions' development under Soviet rule. However, social problems in mono-towns in the Russian Arctic are currently large and growing.

#### Current & Relevant Information:

A study recently published examines the factors generating such problems. Some are inherent in all Arctic mono-towns, such as the harsh environmental conditions, the remoteness from financial and administrative centers, and the dependence on “city-forming” companies.

Other problems, Vera Samarina and her co-authors of the Kola Science Centre of the Russian Academy of Sciences and the Belgorod State National Research University claim, are due to deficiencies in the municipal administration.

These include the lack of necessary social institutions, a problematic relationship between the city and its most important company, a lack of funds for implementing municipal social policies, and an insufficiently skilled labor force.

**“My Country, Right or Wrong: Russian Public Opinion on Ukraine,” Denis Volkov and Andrei Kolesnikov, Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 7 September 2022 [212] <https://carnegieendowment.org/2022/09/07/my-country-right-or-wrong-russian-public-opinion-on-ukraine-pub-87803>**

## Overview:

When Russia launched its invasion of Ukraine on February 24, Western governments, including the United States, immediately condemned what they described as “Vladimir Putin’s war.” Surely, this formulation was no accident. It was aimed, first and foremost, at drawing a distinction between the actions of the Kremlin and the attitudes of ordinary Russians. There was optimism that ordinary Russians would not countenance a war against a neighboring country. But hopes of Russian grassroots opposition to the war were swiftly dashed. Indeed, public opinion polls have consistently shown overwhelming support (70 percent or higher) for what Moscow calls its “special military operation” in Ukraine. Contrary to expectations, Putin’s popularity has also seen a boost, similar to what happened in the immediate wake of the 2014 annexation of Crimea.

Partly in response to these indicators, figures like Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy have called for a visa ban for all Russian passport holders, with an exception for people whose safety is at risk or who are vulnerable to political persecution. According to Zelenskyy, “[T]he most important sanctions are to close the borders—because the Russians are taking away someone else’s land” and Russians should “live in their own world until they change their philosophy.” He added, “The population picked this government and they’re not fighting it, not arguing with it, not shouting at it.” Such sentiments are echoed in calls by some European politicians, such as Finnish Prime Minister Sanna Marin, for an EU ban on tourist visas. “It’s not right that at the same time as Russia is waging an aggressive, brutal war of aggression in Europe, Russians can live a normal life, travel in Europe, be tourists. It’s not right,” Marin said in mid-August.

At the same time, a careful reading of popular Russian attitudes toward the war reveals important nuances that all too often are overlooked. First and foremost is the fact that rather than consolidating Russian society, the conflict has exacerbated existing divisions on a varied array of issues, including support for the regime. Put another way, the impression that Putin now has the full support of the Russian public is simply incorrect. A more careful reading of sociological data, including conversations with focus group participants and quantitative research, presents a far more complex picture of Russian society.

*Note: This paper is based on sociological research and opinion polling carried out across Russia by the Levada Center from February to August 2022, as well as on the findings of eight Levada-convened focus groups that were held from March to May 2022 in Moscow and in three regional centers.*

## Current & Relevant Information:

WHO SUPPORTS PUTIN AND WHY?

The general picture of public opinion in Russia can be understood in rather simple terms. All across Russia since February 24, old friends have fallen out; parents and children are no longer on speaking terms; long-married couples no longer trust each another; and teachers and students are denouncing each other. Opinions are becoming polarized. Over time, polarized opinions are becoming radicalized. All of that points to growing conflict within Russian society.

Opinion polls consistently show that the majority of respondents support the actions of the Russian Armed Forces in Ukraine. The scale of that support changed little over the first four months of the war. But the collection of people who express support for what Moscow calls the “special operation” and for Putin himself is not at all homogenous. (As a rule, Putin supporters tend to support the military campaign.) In June 2022, 47 percent of Russians “definitely supported” the actions of the Russian military, while another 28 percent said they “mostly supported” them.

The former can be put into the category of assured or unconditional support. The judgment of these respondents is the most dogmatic: they are more willing to portray the war as what they call a “preemptive blow,” “an unavoidable measure,” or a form of “defense against [the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO)].” These people tend not to question news reports or narratives that are the bread and butter of Russian state media coverage of the war. They express the highest level of support for Putin and a sense of pride over what is happening in Ukraine. In focus group discussions, they pointedly call what is happening in Ukraine “the special operation.” This term makes sense to them because, as various participants outlined: “It’s not like we are taking anything [that isn’t ours]”; “We’re liberating [Ukraine] from Nazis and fascists”; or “That’s what Vladimir Vladimirovich [Putin] called it, and I trust him.”

In the second group, that is, those who “mostly support” Russia’s actions in Ukraine, the level of support is less resolute. There is more doubt over whether what is going on is right or not and the basis for the Kremlin’s actions. Compared with the group offering unconditional support, people in the second group were twice as likely to express feelings of anxiety, fear, and horror about what is going on. They are also far less likely to express pride. For them, the “special operation” is motivated above all by the desire to protect what Russians describe as Ukraine’s Russian-speaking population. Support for the Russian government’s actions is somewhat lower in this group. The convictions of this group are generally less clearly defined, and they are inclined to simply follow the dominant public opinion and official line. It’s likely that some of these respondents say that they support Russian soldiers out of fear of adverse consequences for themselves.

Respondents’ motivations for supporting the “special operation” are quite varied. In the focus groups there were expressions of jingoistic aggression (mostly from men aged 45–50) such as: “Russia has been fighting since the moment it was founded . . . We watched and we waited for how many years? Eight! And why, what for? . . . It’s better to strike first and assert your independence.” Other participants said, “War is

the locomotive of history. We have never invaded anyone; we've only ever defended our borders. Why didn't we do it eight years ago? It wasn't the right time!" Some respondents, especially women and younger people, engaged in a form of self-persuasion, claiming, for example: "There was no choice," or "No, you can't be in favor of war. Our soldiers are being killed there, and Ukrainian soldiers too, and civilians, and children. But what other choice was there? Who can say what other choice there was? Negotiate with them? It was too late!"

Another widespread form of support came from people who are largely indifferent to the situation but who support the government's actions because they believe the government knows best. Members of this grouping said things like: "The people who are worried are those who have relatives and loved ones [in Ukraine]. For everyone else, who doesn't have anyone there, they see it as normal." "I prefer to remain neutral, because I'm not a politician or a soldier and I don't know what's really happening." "I'm a pensioner, we don't have any say in things . . . I hope it will all be over soon and there will be peace."

For such people, the least uncomfortable option is to join the mainstream point of view, since that doesn't force them to think for themselves. It's not comfortable for such respondents to portray themselves as being outside the realm of the country's dominant thinking on current affairs. That attitude, in turn, fosters a tendency to block out negative information and difficult news stories. To this group, everything that is being reported about murder, destruction, and looting must be a provocation by the Ukrainians, fake news, or exaggerated information. Such respondents are ready to believe that Putin really didn't have any other option but to launch a "special operation" to head off an attack on Russia itself.

This sort of conformism does leave room for a certain degree of doubt, but people's desire to remain in their psychological comfort zone prevails: Russians can't be on the bad side; they can only be on the good side.

Another aspect of this kind of passive conformism is a predetermined submission to decisions taken by one's superiors. The type of obedience is dictated not only by passivity, but also by the fear of being fired or even repressed. This may not be the only reason for a respondent's stated position; after all, there are usually varied factors at play, but fear is sometimes one of them.

Among the active conformists, there were respondents who were prepared to get up off the sofa and take part in the war themselves. But they were certainly the minority, and often, that participation consisted of denouncing those whom Putin calls national traitors or a fifth column. Such attitudes have become a widespread phenomenon.

## A DEFENSIVE WAR

There are two key beliefs that allow respondents to remain convinced that the Russian leadership and military are taking the right action: first, that the Russian-



speaking population in Ukraine was under threat and second, that responsibility for what is happening lies entirely with Russia's adversaries. The majority of those who support the "special operation" explain their position in terms of protecting the Russian-speaking population of Ukraine's Donbas region. A deadly threat to "our people," "compatriots," "brothers," "Russian-speakers," and "Russians" is reason enough in the eyes of the majority to justify military intervention in a neighboring country, even though the prevailing wisdom in Russian society under normal circumstances would be not to interfere. In such circumstances, the extreme nature of the situation seems to have justified or even required actions that in normal life would seem impossible and unacceptable. Eight years ago, the majority of respondents justified the annexation of Crimea by Russia and support for separatist fighters in the Donbas in a similar way.

The readiness of Russian public opinion for such measures to be taken in an extreme situation was already being observed at the end of 2021 and start of 2022, when respondents were increasingly saying, "We don't want war, but we're being dragged into one," or "We're being provoked: we'll have to respond and help the Donbas."

Another key source of support for the Russian military is the conviction of most Russians that the United States and NATO are responsible for escalating the conflict in the Donbas. Even in mid-February 2022, 60 percent of respondents expressed this belief, a number that was up 10 percentage points from November 2021.

Only a very small percentage of respondents were prepared to blame the Russian side. Most focus group respondents, especially among the older generation, had no doubt that the West, led by the United States, had long been trying to bring Russia to its knees and surround it with military bases. Some said: "I don't want there to be a war, but it can't be avoided because the United States has come right up to Russia." "The world has forgotten that in recent years, the United States has bombed more than twenty countries: for some reason it's Russia that's the bad guy and the aggressor." "America does what it likes regardless of what others think; it drops bombs wherever it likes." And, "A fight was inevitable. They planned to send Ukrainian troops, with massive support from NATO countries, into the territory of the DNR and LNR [Donetsk and Luhansk People's Republics] and possibly, in [the] future, even into Russian territory."

## THE SCALE OF DISSENT

Currently, about 20 percent of Russians say they do not agree with Russia's actions in Ukraine, up from 14 percent in March. These respondents refer to what is happening as "war" and "Russian aggression." They are more likely to be young, residents of Moscow or other large cities, and consumers of news from the internet. At the same time, people in this category (similar to the first two categories discussed) were still more likely than not to support the "special operation." The only

category of people in which the majority opposed the “operation” were those who are opposition-minded in general and, specifically, do not approve of the actions of Putin, the Russian government, or the State Duma. This same section of Russian society voted against the constitutional amendments in 2020, supported anti-Putin opposition figures, and attended anti-regime protests in early 2021. They are also more likely to have vacationed in Europe or to hold more positive views of the West in general.

When explaining their position, such people said first and foremost that it was unacceptable that people were dying. People in the focus groups said: “Many innocent civilians are dying, and I don’t believe that’s right.” “I can’t help but be moved by other people’s grief . . . I’m a citizen of the country that is, as they say, carrying out the special operation, and I am an unwilling accomplice.” “I feel sorry for the children.” And “It’s impossible to support war.”

Another reason often cited for opposing events in Ukraine was the negative socioeconomic impact in Russia. Respondents noted: “People are losing their jobs . . . Sanctions have been introduced, [and] the economy is collapsing.” “Everything we had dreamed of came crashing down in one moment. Our entire lives, everything we had fought for, all of our plans . . . Prices are increasing. You can’t buy dollars, or the goods we are accustomed to.” And “We should be focusing right now on our domestic problems: the economy, socioeconomic reforms. There’s more than enough to deal with at home!” Others worried that their sons and grandsons could be sent to Ukraine to fight.

Despite the high level of support for both the “special operation” and the Russian regime overall, it is notable that there are now more dissenters in Russia today than there were in 2014. Eight years ago, no more than 10 percent spoke out against the annexation of Crimea (compared to 20 percent who disagree with the government actions in Ukraine in 2022). In 2014, only 11–12 percent of people said they were dissatisfied with Putin. Furthermore, in 2014, there were mass progovernment demonstrations organized by the government in support of its actions in Ukraine. Such gatherings were attended at their peak by tens of thousands of people, according to conservative estimates. But nothing of the sort is being staged today. So what has changed?

In recent months, there has been a significant decline in public support for participating in any type of protest, surely in response to a raft of restrictive measures imposed by the Russian government. Today, just 9–10 percent of respondents say they are prepared to attend a protest, less than half of the level only six months ago. Taking part in unsanctioned protests is now punishable by hefty fines and prison sentences for repeat offenses. Incitement of others to take part in unsanctioned protests and “the discrediting of the Russian Armed Forces” have also been criminalized. In addition, a nationwide ban on holding mass events

introduced during the coronavirus pandemic has not yet been lifted. This restriction has been cited by officials for refusing to grant permission for anti-war rallies.

Focus group participants said: “They have really clamped down on everything. There can be no more mass protests now.” “Protests are pointless, and people have realized that.” “There’s no point, they won’t achieve anything. Everyone wants to live well, and no one wants to take to the streets; they could go to jail or lose their job. People are scared.” And, “I went to a rally, and what happened? Did it change anything? Yes it did: I was fired!”

Yet even in these circumstances, despite such bans and threats of retaliation, some protests continue. According to human rights activists, 16,000 people were detained across 200 Russian cities for taking part in anti-war protests between the launch of the invasion on February 24 and the middle of July. While such numbers remain small in aggregate terms, they are testimony to the fact that parts of a minority segment of Russian society remains prepared to risk their well-being in order to express disagreement with their government.

## COMPARING THE CRIMEA AND DONBAS EFFECTS

The approval ratings of state institutions had already improved as of the end of last year amid mounting tensions along the Russian-Ukrainian border. But when hostilities broke out, support for the Russian authorities immediately shot up. That spike in March was reminiscent of the one seen after the annexation of Crimea back in 2014. In March 2014, government approval ratings rose from 69 percent to 80 percent. In March 2022, the increase was from 71 percent to 83 percent. This boost benefited all government institutions, including increased support for the ruling United Russia party. As in 2014, there was also a parallel spike in optimism over the state of affairs in Russia and the country’s future development. By the end of April, opinion polls were showing that more respondents felt “pride in their people.” The shock from the initial spike in inflation was beginning to wear off by the end of the spring, and people had already started adapting to the new situation.

These systematic surges of support in Russian public opinion demonstrate that overall, support for the regime and support for the “special operation” are largely the same thing. Nearly 90 percent of Putin supporters approve of the “special operation.” That figure is three times lower among Russians who are critical of Putin.

There are also differences between the current mood and that in 2014. Today’s ratings surge is not accompanied by the euphoria that surrounded the Crimea annexation. In 2014, the dominant emotions among Russians were positive: pride in their country, a feeling that a historic injustice had been reversed, and joy over the prowess of the Russian military. Only 3 percent of respondents in 2014 mentioned feeling concerned or fearful. Today is clearly a time of mixed emotions. Even in March 2022, when the feeling of “pride in Russia” prevailed among respondents, especially among the group showing unconditional support for the “special

operation,” about a third of Russians—including many supporters of the Russian campaign—were experiencing “anxiety and fear.” Still, those feelings of fear did not affect the level of support for the country’s leadership.

Support for the authorities was as varied as it was for the “special operation.” In March 2022, about 45 percent of people “definitely approved” of Putin’s actions as president: twice as many as in January. Almost as many (38 percent) “mostly approved” of him, with numerous reservations.

For example, focus group respondents said, “Overall, I don’t agree with everything . . . My pension is small . . . but Putin’s policies are correct, because everywhere around us, there is intrigue against Russia” and “Right now we have to [approve]: you can’t oppose them when there is a war on!”

From their words, it can be concluded that international tensions, the growing pressure on Russia from Western countries, and the introduction of Western sanctions are encouraging the majority of the population to rally around the country’s leadership. This is precisely what happened back in 2014–2015.

## SOURCES OF INFORMATION

People’s attitudes to what is happening in Ukraine depend on which sources they rely on for news and information. This factor carries more weight than the region where the respondent lives or even whether they have relatives in Ukraine.

There were many examples in the focus groups of respondents viewing events through a pro-Russian lens, despite having relatives or acquaintances on the other side of the border. Respondents described how “my work colleague’s mother is in Ukraine and sends her daughter something nearly every day about what [bad people] we are, that we are bombing their homes, and so on,” and “my niece lives in Kyiv; my brother did military service there, got married, and stayed there . . . I’m in favor of the launch of this operation.”

International tensions have had a significant impact on long-term trends involving popular trust in the accuracy of news information from different types of media outlets. In March 2022, there was a sharp increase (10 percentage points up from responses at the end of 2021) in people’s trust in television, which most Russians perceive as a source of “official information.” In recent years, viewership of and trust in television news had been decreasing steadily. There was also a simultaneous decrease (7–8 percentage points) in the level of trust in internet news sources, which had in recent years been growing steadily. Similar trends also occurred in 2014, when trust in official Russian media grew against the backdrop of the conflict.

Conversations with focus group participants shed light on what caused these changes in mood. Many respondents noted the differences in how the conflict is being covered between Russian and Western media as well as between Russian television and internet resources. Respondents said that “an information and

ideological war” had been unleashed by the West against Russia. In these circumstances, “it’s vital to listen to official information,” and “all media working for the enemy should be stopped.” For a significant number of Russians, “the truth is found in Russian resources,” whereas online publications and Western media are spreading fake news.

The following opinions were typical responses: “No one in the entire world is listening to us; they all think we are the enemy, that we’re the bad guys. How can we debunk all these fakes? We’re doing the right thing in good conscience. Meanwhile, the other side is deceiving people and presenting a completely different picture.” Or: “I know someone in Canada; they’re all being indoctrinated there that it was Russia who started this war. And she’s even started to believe that herself. My opinion is that it was the right thing [for Russia] to do. Because there’s pressure from the West; they want to destroy us. And the president is fighting against that, to stop Russia being obliterated.”

Information about what is happening in Ukraine today is being received and interpreted within the echo chambers of respondents’ long-held ideas about Russia and about broader processes that have been taking place across the former Soviet Union, Europe, and the world. These ideas have taken shape over many years and are informed by people’s political leanings, life experiences, and sources of news and information. Official Russian versions of news from Ukraine tie in with many respondents’ existing perceptions, making them easy to believe. Anything that contradicts such versions is rejected by many as lies, manifestations of Russophobia, or enemy propaganda.

Since the start of the conflict, therefore, the majority of Russians have more or less retained long-held convictions: most of those who preferred to get their news from Russian state-controlled television and who supported the regime back in mid-February support the actions of Russian troops today. Similarly, most people who were already opposition-minded (and there were more such people among those who get their news online) do not support the Russian authorities today.

## THE NEW NORMAL

As time passes, attention to the fighting in Ukraine is starting to subside. In March, 64 percent of respondents said they were following events closely. In June, that figure had dropped to 55 percent. In the last few months, the proportion of respondents who mentioned events in Ukraine as among the most memorable occurrences in recent weeks has halved from 75 percent in March to 38 percent in June.<sup>33</sup> By mid-spring, the Russian public was already beginning to recover from the shock caused by the start of the conflict. An extreme situation had become part of people’s everyday routine.

This conclusion is backed up by the findings of focus groups. Respondents noted: “At the start of March, everyone was actively following [the conflict] . . . You wake up

and immediately look at your smartphone . . . [But now] people are trying to think about it less.” “People have gotten accustomed to what is happening and have simply stopped paying attention.” “I don’t have any loved ones there, so it doesn’t particularly worry me. It did before, but not anymore.” And “People were panicking before, but now everyone has calmed down.”

The more time passes, the more the Russian public is distancing itself from what is happening. The conflict is becoming a distant war, and people are increasingly convinced that the fighting will continue for another six months or even longer.

Right now, the focus is on issues of economic and psychological adaptation. For a great many average Russians, daily life consists of coping with new and more challenging socioeconomic conditions: higher prices, the loss of savings, and a lack of confidence in what tomorrow holds. The inability to influence events encourages people to become passive and to think less about international affairs and political development. They need to focus more on everyday issues and their basic survival needs—that is, the here and now. Respondents articulated: “What can I do about it? I can worry, and what then? Nothing will change. It will sort itself out one way or another.” “I can see that the older generation has just resigned itself to it. They understand that they can’t do anything about it or influence the situation in any way.” “It’s obvious that we are regressing, but since we have stayed here, we have to accept the situation for what it is, if we don’t have the opportunity to leave.” “It’s frightening, but what will be, will be. None of this depends on me, so I don’t dwell on it too much.” And “If we can’t change the situation, we have to change our attitude to it, and view everything with optimism and positivity. In any case, I think everything will work out soon, everything will be OK.”

## DOUBLE-EDGED SANCTIONS

At first, the expansion of Western sanctions against Russia elicited a new wave of anxiety among the Russian public. In March, 46 percent of people polled said they were worried about Western sanctions, up 14 percentage points from the end of last year. Twenty-nine percent of Russians said that sanctions had already created serious problems for their families, a 19 percent increase compared with the last poll two years earlier. Residents of large cities, young people, and less-well-off respondents were most likely to talk about the impact of sanctions on their family, though they felt the effects in different ways. Poorer people were most worried about inflation and the higher cost of living. Young people were more noticeably concerned by the exodus of foreign brands and the end of access to foreign online retailers.

Muscovites lamented the disappearance of overseas air travel routes, as well as the departure of many brands. The bigger the city, the more integrated it was into the global economy, and the more keenly sanctions are being felt. Interestingly, the segment that was the most worried by sanctions were Russians who were critical of their government and who did not support the “special operation.” They were almost

twice as likely to express concern over sanctions compared with supporters of the Russian regime, and they were four times more likely to say they had already felt the impact of sanctions.

Generally, the direct effect of Western sanctions for ordinary Russians has been felt in terms of higher inflation and the overnight disappearance of certain goods from store shelves. Notably, fewer people complained about the blocking of transnational payments, the exit from the Russian market by Visa and Mastercard, or about the cancelation of air routes (see figures 4 and 5). It is important to point out that the number of Russians regularly traveling abroad has always been small in overall terms: in 2018, only one in ten respondents traveled abroad. It seems it would be fair to say that sanctions are having the biggest impact on the most globally integrated Russians, but this population segment is not large enough to have a significant effect on public opinion overall.

By the end of May, the initial shock from the introduction of sanctions had passed. Focus group discussions revealed that many respondents increasingly believe that sanctions “will boost the development of many sectors, both in industry and in agriculture.” Others said: “Without sanctions, we weren’t trying. Now they’ve introduced sanctions, we’ll start trying right away!” and “Sanctions are . . . an opportunity! A chance for new development.”

A poll carried out in Moscow found that just over half of respondents shared that belief, and only a quarter believed that sanctions would do more harm than good.

## THE CONTEXT OF THE 2024 PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION

The “special operation” has triggered the polarization of opinions and positions within different segments of Russian society. Such polarization is making these divisions even more radical and, perhaps, irreconcilable. But even among supporters of the Kremlin’s actions in Ukraine, there is a divide between, first, those who insist on “seeing it through” (essentially, uncompromising supporters of “de-Ukrainianization,” or people who support the complete Russification of Ukraine, including the denial of Ukraine’s nationhood and statehood) and, second, those who support Putin’s actions but would like Russia to cut its losses, declare victory, and agree to peace terms so that everything can go back to how it was before February 24.

Very few respondents were prepared to admit that a Russian defeat was even theoretically possible. If such a turn of events presents itself, one suspects that the Kremlin would still attempt to portray its actions as a form of victory. In turn, such a so-called victory would likely be perceived and accepted as such by public opinion, thanks in part to the level of conformism within society and the amplifying effects of the state propaganda apparatus.

## CONCLUSION

As the war in Ukraine enters its seventh month, the conflict is becoming a routine backdrop to everyday life. Fewer Russians are paying attention. Concern over the conflict is waning. As long as the border remains open for the most dissatisfied Russians to leave the country and there is no mass mobilization order compelling the average person to send their sons and daughters to fight next door, the feeling of basic normality is likely to continue. The drawn-out hostilities are starting to be seen as something of a second pandemic: a storm that must simply be weathered, after which everything will return to the way it should be.

The unanswered question is whether the deterioration of Russia's socioeconomic conditions will change this picture. Already there are indications of reduced state resources for supporting the social needs of an increasingly impoverished population. While the peculiarities of the Russian labor market have yet to result in mass unemployment, there are numerous indications that growing numbers of workers have been placed on furlough by their employers. Smaller numbers of employees have lost their jobs entirely due to the exodus of Western businesses. But will such factors influence public attitudes toward Putin and the "special operation" in Ukraine?

It would be logical to presume that these factors must bring about a change in the public mood, but for now, as far as most respondents are concerned, it is still the West that is to blame for everything. Rumbblings of discontent are possible, but with the opposition and civil society decimated, the general population has shown no interest in effective self-organization. Of course, black swan events can always take the authorities by surprise. In the recent past, protests have erupted in unexpected places over unexpected causes, such as the protests in Khabarovsk in 2020. Still, given the harsh repression of unauthorized civic activity, the emergence of a massive anti-war movement in Russia is unlikely.

It's also worth remembering that the Russian leadership is moving slowly to prepare for the 2024 presidential election, which will take place amid an increasingly authoritarian system. Such preparations may involve show trials and the search for so-called national traitors. Almost surely, there will be even greater pressure on dissenters, with a range of authoritarian tools and repressive laws. Such moves will almost certainly anger average people and alienate parts of the elite. However, such tactics largely serve to frighten key parts of Russian society, which, as experience teaches, will ultimately lead them to rally around the regime yet again.

#### G. Sweden:

**"Sweden," Arctic Council** [213] <https://arctic-council.org/en/about/states/sweden/>

#### Overview:

#### **Quick Facts**

#### **Arctic Territory**



Västerbotten County and Norrbotten County

**Area**

approx 153 400 km<sup>2</sup>

**Arctic Population**

approx. 520 000

**Arctic Indigenous Peoples**

Sámi

Current & Relevant Information:

The two northernmost counties, Västerbotten and Norrbotten, are defined as Sweden's Arctic territory. This region represents about one-third of Sweden's territory, but is populated with just over half of a million inhabitants – more sparsely populated than the southern parts of the country.

Sweden places a great emphasis on climate-related research in the Arctic. As a result of long measurement series, in some cases up to one hundred years, Sweden has contributed to greater global understanding of climate change. Northern Sweden is home to research stations in Abisko and Tarfala as well as the EISCAT12 scatter radar facility in Kiruna. Access to these modern logistics platforms is crucial for environmental research. The Abisko Scientific Research Station administrates, coordinates and performs experiments and tests for researchers from all over the world. An extensive environmental monitoring program on temperature, precipitation, ice-thaw, flora and fauna in the local area has been in progress there for nearly 100 years. The Tarfala Research Station, located in the Kebnekaise mountains, conducts basic research, glacier monitoring, meteorological and hydrological analyses, snow chemistry and permafrost studies.

Efficient ice-breaking operations are required to promote maritime safety and improve accessibility in frozen waters. Sweden possesses leading expertise as regards shipping in Arctic conditions. Swedish icebreakers are able to support increasing commercial shipping in the Arctic as well as help with both the monitoring of the vulnerable marine environment and also Arctic research. In 2011 Sweden adopted a strategy on the Arctic region, where it promotes economically, socially and environmentally sustainable development.

**“Sweden's strategy for the Arctic region,” Government Offices of Sweden, 2020**

[214]

<https://www.government.se/contentassets/85de9103bbbe4373b55eddd7f71608da/swedens-strategy-for-the-arctic-region-2020.pdf>

Overview:

Sweden will contribute, as one of the eight Arctic countries, to peaceful, stable and sustainable development in the Arctic. The Government wants to strengthen Sweden's Arctic profile by making use of the full range of knowledge and resources available in Sweden.

#### Current & Relevant Information:

##### **Introduction**

Sweden is an Arctic country. Sweden therefore has a particular interest in and responsibility for promoting peaceful, stable and sustainable development and contributing to constructive international cooperation in the Arctic. As one of the eight Arctic countries, Sweden is a member of the Arctic Council.

The Arctic is facing both new opportunities and severe challenges. This applies especially to the dramatic climate and environmental changes. Global warming has hit the Arctic particularly hard, reducing the extent of ice and permafrost cover and affecting biological variability and the living conditions of the region's population. The indigenous peoples are particularly vulnerable. Climate change has also played a part in increasing the economic importance of the Arctic. The smaller ice cover creates new conditions for the use of natural resources and sea transport, for instance. The region's geostrategic importance has increased for both Arctic and non-Arctic states. Increased military presence and activity in the region have security policy consequences. COVID-19 has underlined the need for both resilience and preparedness in the local communities in the Arctic region to deal with pandemics.

Sweden has to take these changes in the Arctic into account. A Swedish core interest is to try to contribute to a peaceful, stable and sustainable development of the region through well-functioning international cooperation with Arctic and non-Arctic actors in the region. In both bilateral and multilateral settings, the Government will uphold an approach based on a broad concept of security. It is an overarching Swedish interest to uphold respect for international law and the rules-based world order, which form part of the foundations for international security and stability in the region. The Government will also contribute to achieving relevant global Sustainable Development Goals in the 2030 Agenda in the Arctic, too, and show leadership in the implementation of the international climate agreement (the Paris Agreement) to limit global warming, including in the Arctic.

The changes in the Arctic have also led to increased international interest in the region. Several countries in Europe and Asia have become observers to the Arctic Council. The European Union (EU) has strengthened its Arctic profile. The Government welcomes this development and takes a positive view of the possibility of mobilizing increased international support and engagement to address the global challenges, in the Arctic region, in particular the impacts of climate change.

At the same time, it is in Sweden's interest to safeguard the special role and position of the Arctic states in promoting peaceful, stable and sustainable development in the Arctic region, mainly by strengthening cooperation in the Arctic Council.

The Government's previous strategy for the Arctic region was adopted in 2011, the same year that Sweden assumed the rotating two-year Chairmanship of the Arctic Council for the first time. In the light of the rapid developments in the region, there is now reason for the Government to adopt a new integrated approach to Arctic policy.

This renewed strategy is intended to set out the Government's objectives and main priorities in relation to the Arctic region and to specify the political direction of further work on the Arctic in six thematic areas:

1. international collaboration;
2. security and stability;
3. climate and the environment;
4. polar research and environmental monitoring;
5. sustainable economic development and business interests;
6. securing good living conditions.

One important starting point for the strategy is to make use of the full range of knowledge and resources available in Sweden regarding the Arctic region so as to contribute to sustainable development in the Arctic and also to enhance Sweden's profile as an important actor in this respect. For a long time, Sweden's engagement in the Arctic has involved not only the Government, the Riksdag and government agencies, but also regional and local authorities, indigenous peoples' organizations, higher education institutions, businesses and other actors in Sweden's Arctic region.

**“Sweden,” The Arctic Institute Center for Circumpolar Security Studies, 1 August 2022 [215] <https://www.thearcticinstitute.org/countries/sweden/>**

#### Overview:

Stockholm, Sweden's largest city and the capital, has a population of 2 371 774 million. Most big cities, including Stockholm, Gothenburg, Uppsala and Malmö are situated in the south of the country. Although it is sparsely populated, approximately 15% of the total land area is situated north of the Arctic Circle. Kiruna, the northernmost and most populated town in Sweden's Arctic, was home to 22,906 inhabitants in December 2019. Kiruna, built on top of an iron ore mine, is in the process of moving three kilometers east by 2033 to avoid collapsing into the mine pit. While general weather conditions in northern Sweden are harsh, with average winter temperatures hovering around -10 C°, its 17 C° summer average and long hours of sunlight allow for the industrial cultivation of grains, potatoes, and grass for hay.

Sweden has positioned itself as one of the most progressive countries on environmental issues in the world. With 99% of its solid waste recycled or used to produce biogas, Sweden was the first country to establish an environmental protection agency in 1967. Despite its reputation, Sweden has surprisingly light forestry laws, and often leaves decisions about logging to timber companies. The result of such lax regulation is the loss of large swaths of biologically-rich boreal forests in the North to clear cuts that remove up to 95% of the trees, leave deep tire tracks, and are often re-planted with lodgepole pine, a species imported from North America. The World Wildlife Fund has reported that two thousand forest-dwelling species are threatened in Sweden. Mining in Sweden's northern county of Lapland, in particular iron ore, has also led to environmental concerns over waste materials, heavy metal leaching, water contamination, and habitat destruction.

Sweden accounts for less than 0.2% of total global emissions, and has committed to building a society with no net greenhouse gas emissions by the year 2050. Northern Sweden is home to several climate research stations monitored by the Swedish Polar Research Secretariat, including an atmosphere radar facility and field stations capable of glacier monitoring and permafrost studies. Like the rest of the Circumpolar North, Sweden's Arctic territory is facing some of the world's most intense temperature increases and increased precipitation. Such changes may lead to greater water flows, changes in soil conditions, and more extreme weather patterns. Sweden has made climate change research, mitigation, and adaptation top priorities in its national Arctic policy. Climate change leaves Sámi culture and industries particularly vulnerable, as they traditionally have strong links to the surrounding natural environment. Sweden's Arctic strategy aims to strengthen the long-term capacity of these communities and of the surrounding environment to help them adapt to a changing climate.

#### Current & Relevant Information:

Of Sweden's total population, only 5.4% live in the Arctic. With an average age of 41 in the north, Sweden is the second oldest arctic nation, and has seen a moderate decline of population since 2000 that is projected to continue. A testament to the internationalization of place and population in the 21st Century Arctic, each year just over 50,000 seasonal migrant workers from Asia and Eastern Europe are provided temporary work permits for berry picking.

Of all residents in the North, an estimated 17,000 to 20,000 are Sámi, an indigenous Finno-Ugric group that speaks the official minority language of Sámi. Sámi country, known as Sápmi, stretches across the northern parts of Scandinavia and Russia's Kola Peninsula. The Sámi were originally nomads, living in tents during the summer and more sturdy peat huts during the colder seasons. Nowadays Sámi live in modern housing and only use tents as temporary accommodations during reindeer migrations if they do not already own cottages. Oral storytelling and Sámi music have a central role in traditional culture. Yoiking, a distinctive form of singing to recall

events, people, and nature, is a core part of this tradition. Today Sámi are able to choose between attending government Sámi schools or regular municipal nine-year compulsory schools, where they can also receive instruction in Sámi. The aim of Sámi education in Sweden is to give the children the same instruction that Swedish children receive in the compulsory school while providing them with schooling that takes into account their own linguistic and cultural background.

Traditionally, their best-known means of livelihood is reindeer herding to provide meat, fur, and transportation. About 10% of Sámi today are connected to reindeer herding. For centuries the Sámi faced discrimination throughout the Nordic countries, often resulting in disputes over grazing rights and logging territories. Since the 1970s and 1980s, however, the Sámi in Sweden have steadily gained special protections and rights. This relative increase in their rights to their land and how it is used reached new height in January 2020 when the Supreme Court of Sweden voted against the government and gave Sámis exclusive rights to hunting and fishing across a swathe of Arctic Sweden.

**“In Sweden’s Far North, a Space Complex Takes Shape,” Thomas Erdbrink and Christina Anderson, The New York Times, 10 June 2021 [216]**

<https://www.nytimes.com/2021/05/23/world/europe/sweden-space-arctic-satellites.html>

#### Overview:

The government is turning an old research base above the Arctic Circle into a state-of-the-art satellite launching center.

#### Current & Relevant Information:

While the United States, China, Russia and several other countries already have spaceports, Sweden’s would be the first orbital launch site for satellites in Europe — capable of launching spacecraft into orbit around Earth or on interplanetary trajectories. Currently, the intergovernmental European Space Agency launches its traditional single-use Ariane rockets from French Guiana.

Several private European companies are designing spaceports in Europe to host a new generation of smaller rockets. Portugal is looking into building one on the Azores Islands, two remote sites have been allocated in Britain and Norway is upgrading its Andoya Space Center.

But none are as far along as Sweden, which is transforming an old Arctic space research center into a complex featuring several new pads for orbital launches and landings. The Esrange Space Center will be a testing ground for Europe’s first reusable vertical rocket in 2022, and it can conduct engine tests as well.



In 1972, the Swedish government took over the base from the European Space Agency, which no longer needed it. For decades, the Swedes hired out the site for smaller, slower research rockets, satellite ground-control services and the launching of stratospheric balloons. But with the commercial space race promising new revenue, the government-owned Swedish Space Corporation, which manages the site, is offering launch services to private ventures wishing to send satellites into space.

#### Social Issues:

**“Is There a State Crisis in Sweden?” John H. S. Åberg, *Society*, 2019 [217]**  
<https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s12115-018-00320-x>

#### Abstract:

Is Sweden a failed state in the making or a paradise on earth? Neither. Sweden is a functioning democracy but it faces serious challenges. This article attempts to make sense of them. It considers issues of law and order and the emergence of parallel structures of power. It shows that Sweden, following an unprecedented wave of immigration, is experiencing an ongoing struggle to define the nation.

#### Current & Relevant Information:

## Introduction

You know the narrative: Something is terribly wrong in Sweden. The progressive Scandinavian welfare state is crumbling. Right-wing influencers, YouTube reporters, Donald Trump, and RT are all warning about rampant social problems that seem to be tearing the country apart. Even Swedish politicians and commentators – among the Left and the Right alike – seem to agree. If we are to believe some of their rhetoric, Sweden is a failed state in the making.

Yet according to a number of indicators Sweden seems to enjoy the fruits of overwhelming success. In 2018, Sweden ranked number seven in the Human Development Index, and in 2017, Sweden ranked number six in the Good Country Index. While the Fragile State Index ranked South Sudan as number 1, Sweden ranked 170 among 178 countries. To continue, and with the risk of belaboring the point, the Global Competitiveness Index (2018), the Country Brand Index (2015), the Happiness Index (2018), and the Social Progress Index (2017) reveal that Sweden ranks number 7, 4, 9, and 8 respectively. In other words, Sweden is among the world elite of high performing countries. Swedish government officials often use this fact as a counterpunch against critics who dare to smear Sweden's beautiful image.

How to make sense of this paradox: a country that is both successful and in crisis? In what follows, I will try to explain it, focusing on the problems that Sweden currently faces.

**“The Far Right Is Ready For a Slice of Real Power in Sweden,” Rafaela Lindeberg and Ott Ummelas, Bloomberg, 11 May 2021 [218]**

<https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2021-05-11/the-far-right-is-ready-to-claim-a-slice-of-real-power-in-sweden>

### Overview:

The populists who've been battling to shut down immigration into Europe may be heading for a significant breakthrough in Sweden.

The far-right Sweden Democrat party may well have the votes to help the conservative opposition secure a majority after next year's elections, and the evidence is mounting that traditional right-wing politicians will be tempted to cut a deal to give the anti-immigrant group a say in government.

### Current & Relevant Information:

The populist party's emergence has tracked the Nordic country's influx of immigrants and difficulties integrating them. A worsening in gang-related violence in recent years has also pushed more voters to the right, and parties across the political spectrum have taken a tougher stand on migrants in the wake of Europe's refugee crisis in 2015.

“The old arguments for not talking to us no longer exist,” Sweden Democrat leader Jimmie Akesson said in an interview, adding the conservatives agree with him “at least on the direction.” “It’s difficult to call us ugly names and at the same time copy our politics.”

While European populists haven’t managed the major breakthrough that some people feared was at hand in the aftermath of Donald Trump’s victory in 2016, French nationalist Marine Le Pen is stronger than ever as she prepares to take on President Emmanuel Macron next year and Italy’s Matteo Salvini is still the narrow favorite to follow Mario Draghi. Sweden could prove a bellwether for a broader shift in European politics.

Ulf Kristersson, the leader of the opposition Moderate party, had his first face-to-face meeting with Akesson in 2019, shortly after the nationalist party had surged to the top of the opinion polls.

This January, he said the Sweden Democrats had become a “constructive force” in parliament and that he would cooperate with them.

In late 2017, Kristersson had repeatedly said he wouldn’t engage with the Sweden Democrats. That year, Trump triggered an angry backlash from Swedes when, at a rally in Florida, he appeared to link the rise in crime in the country to higher immigration. That link is now more widely accepted.

While Sweden has slashed immigration by half from its peak in 2016, the Sweden Democrats have signaled they would go much further to stem the flow, and aim to repatriate refugees to war-torn countries such as Syria. They also want to stop paying some benefits to anyone who isn’t a Swedish citizen, or about 9% of the population of 10.4 million.

The Moderates tweeted Tuesday that those who are denied a residency permit in Sweden have to return to their homeland, and that the party wants to deny foreign aid to countries that refuse to take back their own citizens.

## **Rising Crime**

Sweden, at the top of most global welfare rankings, has traditionally sought to be a safe haven by accepting waves of immigrants since World War II. The country, which grew accustomed to relatively low levels of crime, has witnessed a surge of bombings and riots in immigrant neighborhoods in the past decade.

Sweden’s police chief last August lamented an “extremely serious” escalation of violence related to gang crime, urging society to “put its foot down.” He spoke after two people were murdered in Stockholm in a week and several police officers were injured during a riot in the southern city of Malmo. A 12-year-old girl had also been killed “in a criminal showdown” earlier that month.



The country reported about 10 times more deadly shootings than the U.K. in the past year, adjusted for population size.

A poll by DN/Ipsos on Monday showed policies on migration and integration remain the biggest priority for Swedish voters. The proportion who also point to law and order as one of the most important issues is greater than ever at 22%.

Akesson's party, once shunned across the political spectrum, first made it into parliament in 2010 and became the third-biggest in Sweden by 2018. It has made itself more palatable for traditional right-wing politicians in past years by weeding out neo-Nazis and reversing its stand on leaving the European Union.

"When they entered parliament, the entire leadership of SD were part of a neo-nazi party that later changed," said Jonas Hinnfors, professor in political science at the University of Gothenburg. "Some of that leadership was part of that change of course."

While Kristersson, the Moderate leader, has opened up to the party, he's said he wouldn't invite them into a coalition with a smaller conservative peer, the Christian Democrats.

This suggests the Moderates may opt for a minority government, while relying on support from Akesson's party on specific issues such as migration. That would resemble the fragile constellation negotiated by Social Democrat Prime Minister Stefan Lofven, which took four months of fraught talks after the last elections.

The opposition conservative block, including the Moderates, Christian Democrats and Sweden Democrats, had 47.3% support in the latest poll from Demoskop, ahead of the 44.5% tally for the Social Democrats, Greens and their budget allies.

### **Boarding Party**

Either way, Akesson has been preparing by beefing up the ranks of people experienced in governing, calling it his "boarding party."

"We have recruited expertise during this term, especially from the Moderates," Akesson said. Still, talks on any formal deal between the potential partners haven't started yet.

Even though Sweden is decades behind some of its European peers on right-wing politics, the normalization of the radical right started several years ago in Sweden with the adoption of their ideas, according to Cas Mudde, a professor at the University of Georgia and an expert on far-right politics. "Collaboration, where radical right parties are also normalized, is often the next logical step."

Last weekend, Lofven's budget ally, the Liberal Party, joined nationalists and the conservative opposition to challenge a migration policy deemed too lax. They want

to restrict awarding residence permits on humanitarian grounds and tighten conditions for family reunification, among other things.

About 675,000 adult immigrants in Sweden are dependent on benefits, while the country has granted more than 400,000 asylum-related residence permits in the last decade, the Moderates said last month.

While Kristersson denied a conservative bloc is in the making, experts said a shift is under way.

“We have a right-wing bloc again, with a nationalistic social-conservative party weighing heavily within that four-party constellation,” Professor Hinnfors said. “Of course, there are a lot of tensions within that bloc.”

A potential coalition involving the Sweden Democrats could still stumble as “there’s a lot of skepticism among the other parties on the Sweden Democrats’ views on Swedishness, ethnicity, but also perhaps gender issues,” he said.

Akesson suggests his party may still be attractive to xenophobic elements “as long as Stefan Lofven and others continue to call us racists.”

“But the important thing is how we handle it when we discover it,” Akesson said.

“And there’s no doubt at all that we have a very low level of tolerance when it comes to extremism and racism.”

**“Sweden’s far right gaining ground as social problems mount,” Hans Mathias Moeller, Global Risk Insights, 10 March 2017 [219] [https://rinf.com/alt-news/newswire/swedens-far-right-gaining-ground-as-social-problems-mount/#google\\_vignette](https://rinf.com/alt-news/newswire/swedens-far-right-gaining-ground-as-social-problems-mount/#google_vignette)**

Overview:

Sweden’s immigration policy is honorable but has not come without social problems — which in turn herald a political shakeup.

Current & Relevant Information:

Sweden has accepted more refugees per capita than any other European country. At the height of the European refugee crisis in 2015, Sweden accepted 10,000 refugees per week. Sweden’s liberal immigration policy is honorable, but it does not come without problems. As social problems increase, Sweden’s far right party, the Sweden Democrats (SD) are gaining territory and will likely be the major winner in the next election.

**“Sweden: Key Challenges,” Sustainable Governance Indicators, 2024 [220] [https://www.sgi-network.org/2022/Sweden/Key\\_Challenges](https://www.sgi-network.org/2022/Sweden/Key_Challenges)**

Summary:

The years 2022 and 2023 have been a period of dynamic change for Sweden, with sharp political shifts occurring against the backdrop of the armed conflict in Europe between Russia and Ukraine. This war severely upset the balance of the Nordic-Baltic region, leading to far-reaching consequences. As a direct result of the conflict, Sweden, seemingly overnight, overturned a policy of neutrality that had been in place since the end of the Napoleonic Wars (1814) and sought NATO membership, effective March 2024. The process was fraught with realpolitik, with leaders from Türkiye and Hungary trying to elicit concessions from Sweden to avoid a veto. Both the Social Democratic bloc and the center-right minority government were in agreement on the NATO membership issue.

The 2022 elections resulted in the Social Democratic bloc losing power. The radical right-wing populist Sweden Democrats came in second with 73 seats, compared to the Social Democrats' 107 and the Moderate Party's 68. After the election, the cordon sanitaire against the Sweden Democrats finally fell, and the parties in the right-wing camp entered into negotiations with the Sweden Democrats. These negotiations to form a new government took 37 days. Although the Sweden Democrats do not hold cabinet positions, their influence became evident in the Tidöavtalet – the compromise that led to the government formation – which includes punitive measures against crime that also undermine civil rights. As the largest party in the right-wing bloc, the Sweden Democrats also exerted significant influence in the day-to-day process of governing as a supporting party of a minority government consisting of Moderates, Liberals, and Christian Democrats. Researchers are focusing on the conduct of elections within the broader climate of misinformation and disinformation, while political parties in general continue to lose membership.

Freedom of speech and information transparency remain robust. The public debate surrounding the Quran burnings during the NATO membership negotiations centered on the tensions between free speech and hate speech. In the end, these burnings were ruled as free speech, though a constitutional amendment limits the freedom to associate if this association is connected to, for example, terrorist activities.

The post-COVID period saw inflation spike to 10%, then fall to about 3.5% in 2022. The economy is forecast to recover, and the trend of an inclusive labor market with increased employment rates for foreign-born people persists, even as the de facto segregation of certain areas and increased violence from organized crime also persists.

Sweden remains a forerunner in environmental protection, with an articulated goal of becoming carbon neutral by 2045 and a detailed, albeit non-binding, plan to achieve this target. However, recent actions by the current center-right minority government, such as lowering fuel taxes, suggest a prioritization of economic benefits over environmental protection. Additionally, the government is working to expand nuclear energy for electricity generation.

This period also marked the proposition to radically reorganize the research funding structure in the country. A relevant commission of inquiry suggested abolishing the existing four funding agencies, which focused broadly on innovation, sustainability, working life, and high-quality research. Additionally, it recommended discontinuing the research budget for the Swedish Energy Agency. Instead, it proposed forming three large funding agencies. This change is framed as an effort to modernize the research funding structure. Such framing – “getting with the times” – was also used when the government announced large cuts to Swedish Radio.

Recent developments have led to reactive shifts in public policy and reinforced the stronghold of a radical right-wing populist party, even in Sweden. These changes underscore a trend: Swedish democracy is becoming less unique and more similar to other European countries.

#### Current & Relevant Information:

#### **Key Challenges**

Perhaps the biggest challenge the world currently faces is climate change. Sweden has been a forerunner in environmental regulation, but the more permissive attitude of the current center-right minority government is a cause for concern. Radical policy priorities are necessary if Sweden is to reach carbon neutrality by 2045.

A pressing domestic challenge in the near future is the grip of gang violence in some urban areas. The Swedish system was not equipped to handle such high levels of violence. Its inability to control the situation has led to a punitive turn, with the debate focusing on retribution, long custodial sentences, and overcrowded prisons, rather than addressing the root causes of such violence. Gang violence has recently started to spread to neighboring countries such as Norway.

Politics in Sweden is challenged to protect its consensus-oriented decision-making system. Inter-party collaboration has been precarious and short-lived, and the empowerment of the radical-right populist Sweden Democrats has disrupted collaborative processes. The ability to compromise on divergent interests in contemporary political disputes is being alarmingly challenged. Affective discordance and social changes, such as increasing material inequality, have consequences for the ability of actors to compromise.

Further, the loss of neutrality due to NATO membership represents a significant loss of identity for Sweden, even though the narrative of non-alignment has primarily catered to domestic audiences in recent years. With NATO and recent geopolitical shifts, there is an amplified emphasis on preparedness and defense. This is expected, as Sweden is considered capable of affording the increased defense expenditure that accompanies NATO membership.

It is important not to lose sight of social policies or infrastructure investment. Healthcare is one sector that has not been generously funded, and the performance

of the health and care systems in Sweden is under serious pressure. The performance of the welfare state in Sweden is challenged. The policy of numerous and far-reaching tax cuts, combined with demographic changes, the challenges of integration policy, and security policy obligations, has eroded the financial basis of the welfare state alongside the need to make necessary investments in infrastructure. One challenge for the future will be to achieve a fiscal and budgetary balance against the backdrop of these developments.

In terms of inclusion policies, the labor market trend is positive for people who have traditionally faced challenges in finding employment, such as young individuals or those born outside Sweden. However, integrating the high number of migrants and the increasing number of people with low educational qualifications into one of the world's most agile and innovative societies will remain a challenge for integration policy.

**“From Margins to Mainstream: Fostering Inclusion in Sweden,” Christelle Mestre, Renée Lariviere, and Amanda Olsson Myrvik, Interpeace, September 2016 [221]**  
<http://www.interpeace.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/10/From-Margins-to-Mainstream-Interpeace-Sept.-2016.pdf>

Summary:

### **Rising Social Tensions in Sweden**

For the last few decades, Sweden has been seen to embody the principles of openness and inclusion. Today, it is facing challenges of social inclusion and integration. Like many other European societies, Sweden saw an increase of violent incidents associated with socio-economic exclusion and discrimination across the country, especially in the suburbs of large urban centers.

The arrival of large numbers of migrants and refugees on the European continent in 2015 captured the attention of the media, and sensational reporting reinforced negative perceptions and stereotypes of immigrants among the public, reviving and polarizing the debate on the effectiveness of integration policies and practices.

Such debates have shed light on existing tensions and divisions in Swedish society, including a widening gap between those considered “native” and “non-native” to the country. This divide is particularly noticeable between communities living in the suburbs of major cities and Swedes living in ‘well-off’ neighborhoods. While Sweden has taken great steps towards building an inclusive society, critical challenges remain. The growing discrimination and marginalization of immigrant populations prompt need for further reflections about the state of inclusion in Swedish society.

### **Interpeace in Sweden**

The work of Interpeace in Sweden is grounded in the idea that peace may also be built in societies commonly considered as peaceful. Social cohesion and inclusion

need to be at the core of all societies, regardless of geographical location or levels of development.

Interpeace engaged with more than 200 stakeholders across Sweden in 2015-2016 seeking to capture views and better understand how inclusion can be increasingly fostered. Research and participatory consultations were carried out in four different locations of Sweden (Älvsjö, Tensta, Luleå and Rosengård) seeking to explore the role that individuals can play in making their societies more inclusive. This report presents the results and reflections from the research as well as showcasing the stories, frustrations, hopes and enthusiasm of various groups of citizens from across Sweden.

## **Main Findings**

Exclusion and marginalization of societal groups sow the seeds for misunderstanding, mistrust and potentially violence. Inclusion serves as a base to build bridges of understanding across groups and segments of society. Fostering inclusion also allows for communities to increase local ownership and responsibility over the challenges they face.

Findings from Interpeace's research reveal that inclusion is understood and experienced very differently by communities, who are influenced by perceptions and stereotypes, but also by their individual and collective identities and their socio-economic backgrounds. During the research, three fundamental and overarching aspects emerged as cornerstones of inclusion: acceptance, dignity and variability. The findings highlight how acceptance, dignity and variability contribute to greater inclusion, as shared by the communities of Älvsjö, Luleå, Rosengård and Tensta.

- **Acceptance:** It was found that people first need to accept who they are, then accept others, and finally feel that they are themselves accepted by the people around them. Achieving these three levels of acceptance provides an individual with the necessary means to promote inclusion. Moreover, understanding and strengthening the factors that can have a positive impact on acceptance, such as an inclusive national identity, equalitarian norms, language, interactions, self-confidence and role models, are key to fostering inclusion.
- **Dignity:** It was noted that when conditions are met for individuals to participate meaningfully in society, have a role that is recognized and valued by others, and develop and fulfil their potential, greater inclusion can be achieved. The consultations revealed that having access to education, finding work, sustaining yourself and your family, gaining recognition for playing a role and making a contribution to society emerged as important factors that contribute to dignity. This sense of well-being was said to provide a strong sense of self-value that reinforces inclusive perceptions and behaviors.

- **Variability:** Celebrating variability was identified as a fundamental factor contributing to inclusion. It was observed that variability generates positive outcomes such as social justice, economic competitiveness and prosperity. The findings also revealed that stakeholders in the four communities believe that greater inclusion can be achieved despite the widespread prejudice and negative stereotypes that currently exist in Sweden. Participants showed how the power of positive stories of collaboration, respect and appreciation between individuals and groups from areas considered either as marginalized and non-marginalized fosters inclusion.

## **Conclusion**

While the findings reveal a large gap between areas considered as marginalized and non-marginalized with regards to inclusion, the report shows that the principle of inclusion is an aspiration sought by all citizens. The consultations showed that there are many people who already go to great lengths to foster inclusion in their lives and communities. The numerous initiatives and individual efforts that promote variability attest to a growing movement of citizens who want to contribute to greater inclusion.

Despite these initiatives and efforts, it was noted that inclusion can only be effectively fostered if a systems-approach is adopted. All actors should play a constructive role and combine efforts at all levels – from local to national – by involving key stakeholders and including ordinary citizens, civil society, municipalities, the private sector and institutions of the state.

Sweden has long been seen as a ‘humanitarian superpower’ that avoids military conflict, but stands on the front line of helping the world’s dispossessed. Today is an opportunity for Sweden to show how it can build on its years of experience and set the example for other European nations to follow. Sweden has the opportunity to construct the foundations for a society that is richer in empathy, and promotes openness and solidarity at home. Failing to take these steps, the country will see poorly integrated immigrant communities continue to grow in size and scope, and social exclusion will increase accordingly. After all, a surplus of compassion is not the worst vice for a country to have.

## **Recommendations**

In light of the research, suggested recommendations were made that can be taken up by various stakeholders working on this topic.

- **Inclusion:** from local to national ownership. Fostering inclusion requires that everyone takes ownership and collectively redefines inclusion at all levels of society. This requires efforts to make inclusion explicit in the policy agenda, and to adopt a holistic view of policy-making for inclusion. This also requires extensive awareness-raising efforts to sensitize ordinary people about the state

of inclusion in Sweden, so they can understand the different realities that people face and take action to foster inclusion in their daily lives.

- Adapting to local needs to achieve greater impact. Efforts to foster inclusion at the local level need to be adapted and tailored to specific individuals and groups as a way to achieve greater impact. In particular, this means that those that lack the skills, knowledge and self-confidence to become active citizens should be given specific support, such as capacity-building trainings, which can be a real trigger for individuals who feel disempowered. Moreover, in order to better understand the barriers to inclusion and interactions within communities, citizen's dialogues could be introduced to map the needs and priorities of local communities.
- Promoting a culture of dialogue, openness and solidarity. Swedish society needs to create the conditions that will make it less likely for segregation to grow in the future. Specifically, this means that ordinary citizens must be engaged and willing to meet with new people. There is a wealth of initiatives, structures and organizations that facilitate interaction between ordinary citizens. Specific actions should be implemented to raise awareness about these initiatives, and sensitize people about the benefits of interactions and variability.
- Tackling barriers to exclusion in the schooling and employment systems. Schools are critical environments where actions must be taken to lay the foundations for better inclusion. This could be done by encouraging exchanges between schools where students come from different cultures, but also by investigating what can be done within the 'free school choice' framework and identifying innovative solutions to existing challenges. In the labor market, certifications and labels for inclusive and non-discriminatory recruitment processes should be created.
- The business sector committing to meaningful partnerships to support local actors. The business sector and external actors could assist local communities in developing and strengthening local assets by sharing their expertise, using their visibility and investing financial means in social responsibility and projects. The business sector and local actors should find new models of collaboration to ensure multi-sectoral engagement.
- Changing the media narratives. Media must commit to telling and show-casing different stories about the realities of Sweden and create parallel narratives by giving a more nuanced image of marginalized neighborhoods. This could be complemented by perceptions surveys, which would attest people's views on the state of inclusion. This could serve as an effective tool to take people's perspectives on board and implement more targeted solutions.

Current & Relevant Information:



## Introduction

Over the past decade, many European countries have witnessed a rising number of youth-led social protests and riots. These events have generally been viewed as a reaction to increasing economic inequalities, a lack of meaningful opportunities in life, and social marginalization. With aspirations and expectations seemingly unattainable, many young people turned to social protest to express their grievances. The growing number of incidents of social unrest in socioeconomically disadvantaged areas with large resident immigrant populations highlight challenges facing European societies today, including the gaps between those considered “native” and “non-native” to a country.

The arrival of large numbers of migrants and refugees on the European continent in 2015 captured the attention of the media and sensational reporting reinforced negative perceptions and stereotypes of immigrants among the public, reviving and polarizing the debate on the effectiveness of integration policies and practices. Amidst ongoing debates on immigration and wide media coverage of violent incidents associated with socio-economic exclusion and racism, there is an urgent need to promote a more inclusive culture in European societies.

For decades, Sweden has been seen to embody the principles of openness and inclusion. The country has a long tradition of humanitarianism, including generous asylum policies. However, in early 2016, the country began to change its policies towards refugees. Tougher measures and legislation to deter asylum seekers were adopted.

Subsequent debates on immigration have exposed the fragility of current integration policies in Sweden. They have also shed light on existing divisions in Swedish society, and a widening gap between mainstream Swedes and those living in the suburbs of major cities that hold large immigrant populations. These areas are increasingly seen as the ‘physical’ representation of the limitations of integration in Sweden.

However, the suburbs of Sweden are filled with individuals that have very different histories, experiences and lives. Beyond the frustration and disillusionment are many stories of hope, ambition and a longing for success. Residents from these areas strive to advance and achieve a positive outcome for their lives like any other citizen.

**“Safe Sweden faces up to wave of women's killings,” Maddy Savage, BBC News, 6 May 2021 [222] <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-56977771>**

### Overview:

Six women have been killed in just five weeks in Sweden, reigniting debates about domestic violence in a country usually praised for its gender equality.

The deaths span three regions and three generations, but in almost all cases there has been a common thread: the arrest of a man they had had a close relationship with.

Two of the killings took place in broad daylight: one in a rural town center in the south of the country, another at a train and bus station in Linköping, a university city south of the capital.

In Flemingsberg, a low-income Stockholm suburb packed with tower blocks clad in primary colors, a woman was stabbed in the apartment she shared with four young children. The man arrested on suspicion of her murder is someone she reportedly knew well.

#### Current & Relevant Information:

#### **I'm Not So Safe**

"I think it has to be brought up to the surface more, this violence against women, because it's not OK," says Kristian Jansson, 51, who's out shopping in Flemingsberg with his 18-year-old daughter Emma-Louise.

The teenager says the recent killings have amplified wider worries about women's safety in the area, where she rarely goes out alone. "I am not so safe... Because there's so [many] people that kill around here."

The recent wave of killings comes amidst growing concerns about violence towards women in Sweden, which has long held a reputation as one of the world's safest and most gender-equal countries.

In 2020, **16,461** assault cases were reported against women in a close relationship in Sweden. That is a 15.4% rise on the 2019 figure of **14,261**, reported by the National Council for Crime Prevention.

#### **Feminist Government**

Sweden's Gender Equality Minister, Marta Stenevi, says she is "both appalled and upset" by the latest violence, but not surprised. "We have in many ways come quite far in gender equality in Sweden, but we still live with the structures in society that suppress women," she says.

Two weeks ago, she set-up cross-party talks on the issue, after politicians from across the spectrum condemned the latest killings and lobbied for tougher action.

Sweden's self-labelled "feminist government" was already halfway through a 10-year national strategy that includes improving education and offering more protection and support to women under threat.

At the end of this month, a new crisis commission will present an update to the plan, which is expected to include longer prison sentences and an increase in the use of electronic tagging and restraining orders.

It's unlikely to face opposition in parliament, although it won't go as far as some parties had hoped.

Police have welcomed the renewed focus, with national police chief Anders Thornberg describing women's exposure to domestic violence as "a major problem that requires more action". He says his officers are already prioritising attacks on women and children, with a recent investment in 350 extra staff employed to tackle these kinds of crimes.

But he believes criminal punishments are only a "starting point". He's calling for improved co-operation between Swedish authorities such as health and social services, and for society in general to take the issue more seriously.

#### H. United States (Alaska):

**"The United States," Arctic Council** [223] <https://arctic-council.org/en/about/states/the-united-states/>

##### Overview:

##### **Quick Facts**

##### **Arctic Territory**

All United States territory north and west of the boundary formed by the Porcupine, Yukon, and Kuskokwim Rivers; all contiguous seas, including the Arctic Ocean and the Beaufort, Bering and Chukchi Seas; and the Aleutian chain.

##### **Arctic Population**

Approximately 50,000

##### **Arctic Indigenous Peoples**

Aleut, Alutiiq, Yup'ik, Iñupiaq (Northwest Alaskan Inuit), Athabaskan, Tlingit and Haida

##### Current & Relevant Information:

##### **The United States Arctic Region**

The United States became an Arctic nation upon the purchase of Alaska in 1867. Regions above the Arctic Circle include the North Slope Borough, the Northwest Arctic Borough and the Nome Census area. Alaska is the largest and the least densely populated state in the United States. The state has approximately 737,400

inhabitants, over half of whom reside in the two major cities Anchorage and Fairbanks.

Petroleum production and mining have been major industries in Alaska. Other prominent industries include fishing and tourism, which are of rising importance and demand. Nearly two million people travel to Alaska each year to visit its vast glaciers, mountains and wildlife.

The United States has varied interests in the Arctic, including national and homeland security, environmental protection, sustainable development, promoting cooperation and collaboration with the other Arctic nations, involving Indigenous peoples in decisions that affect them and supporting and promoting scientific research across the region. The country's goal is a secure and stable region free of conflict where its interests are safeguarded, its homeland is protected and Arctic States work cooperatively to address shared challenges. The United States Arctic policy was most recently updated in May of 2013 and supports the 2009 National Security Presidential Directive-66 / Homeland Security Presidential Directive-25.

### **Indigenous People**

Indigenous Peoples in Alaska include the Aleut, Alutiiq, Yup'ik, Iñupiaq (Northwest Alaskan Inuit), Athabaskan, Tlingit and Haida. Of these peoples, the Yup'ik, Athabaskans and Iñupiaq live above the Arctic Circle and rely heavily on subsistence hunting and fishing. Approximately 18 percent of the Alaskan population are Indigenous.

**“United States,” The Arctic Institute Center for Circumpolar Security Studies, 1 August 2022 [224] <https://www.thearcticinstitute.org/countries/united-states/>**

#### Overview:

The United States is an Arctic nation and privy to northern regional governance and policy decisions through its 49th state, Alaska. Purchased from the Russian Empire in 1867 for \$7.2 million USD, the Territory of Alaska entered into statehood in 1959. As part of the continental, but not contiguous United States, Alaska is bordered by the Canadian Yukon Territory to the east and the Canadian province of British Columbia to the southeast. To the north lie the Chukchi and Beaufort Seas and the southern waters of the Arctic Ocean. To the west and south lie the Pacific Ocean, with Russia further west across the Bering Strait. Altogether, Alaska has more than 34,000 miles of coastline. Though it is the largest state in the union, it is the least densely populated, with over half of all residents living in two cities – Anchorage and Fairbanks.

Although research like the Arctic Human Development Report considers all of Alaska to be Arctic, Arctic Alaska commonly includes the North Slope Borough, the Northwest Arctic Borough, and the Nome Census area. Larger towns include Prudhoe Bay, Barrow, Kotzebue, Nome, and Galena. The average annual high and

low for Barrow are -8.2 °C (17.2 °F) and -14 °C (6.4 °F), respectively. There are very few roads in the Alaskan Arctic, and many rural communities can only be accessed by aircraft or snowmobile in good weather. Northern Alaska largely consists of tundra covering mountain ranges, permafrost, and coastal plains that provide habitat to bears, wolves, Dall sheep, muskoxen, reindeer, and many birds. The Gates of the Arctic National Park and the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge, both of which are fully and partially protected by federal law, help to preserve Alaska's natural landscapes.

Alaska has been host to a number of high political and media profile environmental issues over the past five decades concerning tensions between natural resource extraction and environmental protection. The debate to permit drilling for oil in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge (ANWR) has been an ongoing controversy since 1977. ANWR, a 19,300,000-acre refuge, is the largest protected wilderness in the US. ANWR's Coastal Plain, also known as the "1002 Area" is rich in petroleum and natural gas deposits, though the amount of economically recoverable oil is debated. The key issue of oil exploration in the Refuge is the potential disturbance to wildlife, particularly the Porcupine Caribou that calve on the Coastal Plain and migrate through the Refuge from Alaska to Canada each year. In 2015, President Obama proposed to declare an additional 5 million acres of the Refuge as a wilderness area, which would put a total of 12.8 million acres of the refuge permanently off-limits to drilling or other development. In December 2017, a Republican-led Congress voted to lift the 40-year-old ban on energy development in ANWR. The decision came through a provision embedded within a larger tax bill mandating that the US Department of the Interior hold lease sales in the "1002 area." The Department of the Interior has stated that it will move forward with ANWR lease sales in 2019, though legal battles are expected.

The Exxon Valdez Oil Spill has left a long, dark legacy on the narrative of oil exploration and environmental protection in the Arctic. On March 24, 1989, the Exxon Valdez oil tanker struck Prince William Sound's Bligh Reef and spilled approximately 10.8 million gallons (37,000 metric tonnes) of crude oil over the next several days. The response was particularly difficult because Prince William Sound's remote location is only accessible by helicopter, plane, or boat. The immediate effects of the spill include as many as 250,000 seabirds, at least 2,800 sea otters, 22 orcas, and an unknown number of fish deaths. Though most wildlife has recovered from the spill as of 2020, orca whales have yet to reach pre-spill levels, and an estimated 16,000 to 21,000 gallons of oil remain on beaches. Still today, there is significant concern over Arctic oil spills from activist groups, local communities, and environmentalists at large, as seen most recently by protests against Shell's now terminated Arctic drilling campaign.

Pebble Mine, on public land in the Bristol Bay area of southwest Alaska, has been among the largest environmental concerns in Alaska in recent years. The proposed copper, gold, and molybdenum mine would be the largest open-pit mine in North

America at two miles wide and over 2,000 feet deep. If developed, the mine poses serious risks of contaminating the watershed, salmon, and other fisheries with mine-generated pollutants such as heavy metals and acid mine drainage. In 2014, the EPA openly questioned the future of the salmon habitat should the mine open and proposed restrictions that would effectively prohibit the project from moving forward. This was followed by the Obama Administration's decision to initiate a 404(c) action under the Federal Clean Water Act, authorizing the EPA "to prohibit, restrict, or deny the discharge of dredged or fill material at defined sites in waters of the United States... whenever it determines, after notice and opportunity for public hearing, that use of such sites for disposal would have an unacceptable adverse impact on one or more of various resources, including fishers." Although this action has stalled the mine and caused the development to lose several investors, the US Army Corps of Engineers has gone against the 404(c) decision and begun an Environmental Impact Assessment for the mine's development. In November 2018, Alaska voters will decide the balance between resource development and salmon habitat protections. Ballot Measure 1, Salmon Habitat Protections and Permits Initiative would implement new requirements and processes for permit applications, reviews, and granting of permits for any project affecting bodies of water related to anadromous fish — virtually killing the economic viability of Pebble Mine.

Alaska's Arctic, like the rest of the region, is facing warming at twice the rate of the rest of the globe. Higher temperatures create dangerous ice conditions; decrease the quantity and quality of annual snowfall; change weather patterns; and shift landscapes as permafrost thaws—all of which seriously undermine ecosystem and wildlife integrity.

#### Current & Relevant Information:

Over 736,000 people live in the [State of Alaska](#). With one of the highest fertility rates in the Arctic, Alaska has one of the youngest and fastest growing populations of the region. Alaska's median age is 34 years, with 39% of Alaska Natives under the age of 20. The population is projected to increase by 28% to 915,211 by 2035. This is not only from above-replacement fertility levels, but also from migration to the state. 61% of Alaska residents were born outside of Alaska, including 7% who were born abroad. Internally, over 20% of the population moved in 2009, making it one of the most mobile states in America. Much of this internal migration was from rural villages to urban areas below the Arctic Circle; the most populous of such cities are Anchorage and Fairbanks, where about 55% of the state's population live. The past century has seen a general trend towards urbanization in America's Arctic. In 1920, only 6% of the population was urban. Today, about two-thirds of the state resides in cities. This is also true for Alaska Natives, over 36,000 of whom live in Anchorage alone.

Alaska Natives make up 14.3% of the population of the State of Alaska. Tribes are generally divided into six major groupings: Unangan (Aleut), Sugpiaq (Alutiiq), Yupik

(Central Yup'ik and Siberian Yupik), Iñupiaq (Northwest Alaskan Inuit), Athabaskans (Interior Indians) and Tlingit and Haida (Southeast Coastal Indians). Of these, the Yup'ik, Athabaskans, and Inupiaq have traditional homelands above the Arctic Circle, with the Yup'ik and Inupiaq spreading across the Russian and Canadian borders, respectively. These groups are hunter-gatherers, and continue to rely heavily on subsistence hunting and fishing of walrus, seal, whale, polar bears, caribou, and fish. The hunting of Bowhead whales benefits all members of an Inupiaq community, as the meat and blubber is allocated to all members according to a traditional formula. In communities with limited access to affordable fruits and vegetables, the consumption of whale and other vitamin rich raw meats provides important nutrition.

Throughout history, the US' governing of Alaska was characterized by little tolerance toward Indigenous belief systems, communities, and languages. Indigenous communities were disenfranchised and mistreated, and often used as geopolitical assets during World War II and the Cold War. While 1959 marked the statehood of Alaska, for Indigenous peoples of the American Arctic the passage of the Alaska Native Claims Act (ANCSA) in 1971 was economically, socially, and politically revolutionary. Signed into law on December 8, 1971 by President Richard Nixon, ANCSA was, and still is, the largest one-time land claims settlement in U.S. history. In 1966, the transfer of all lands in the public domain were frozen pending a settlement of Native land claims; then, in 1970, the Athapaskan Indians won an injunction against building a pipeline across their lands, catalyzing a chain reaction to settle all claims before Alaska's oil could be developed. ANCSA extinguished all previously held Native claims in Alaska, and in return conveyed nearly a billion dollars and 44 million acres of land – the most tribal lands out of all US states – to 12 geographic regions of common heritage and interests. The sovereign status conferred on Native American reservations in the contiguous US does not exist in the Alaska context; instead, land provided by ANCSA is owned by Native-run corporations, with the intent being that all would benefit from resources on any given parcel of land. Twelve regional Native corporations, which encompass 229 tribal groups, own most tribal land and their subsurface mineral rights, and as such rank as the largest private businesses in Alaska.

Alaska Native history and rights have been significantly impacted by its implementation. Native Alaskan culture is thriving today in centers, schools, and community groups, though the century-long colonial rule of the Alaska Territory has resulted in serious inequality, intergenerational trauma, and socio-economic challenges still today. While there has been a general reduction in the proportion of speakers of most Native languages in Alaska due to discriminatory federal policies, there are concerted efforts at language preservation across the state.

Alaska faces a number of public health issues, including alcoholism and suicide that can also be linked to historical trauma and adverse childhood experiences Alaska

has one of the highest per capita alcohol consumption rates in the nation, and a rate of alcohol dependence and abuse that is twice that of the national average. Between 1990 and 1993, 66.6% of all deaths in rural Alaska were alcohol-related. Alaska's suicide rate of 23 for every 100,000 people in 2013 was the second highest in the United States. For Alaska Native men between 15 and 24, the rate is 169 suicides per 100,000—14 times the US national rate. Cited reasons for such drastic numbers include historical trauma, mental illness, unemployment, cultural loss, and spiritual distress.

One of the biggest issues facing Alaskan communities today is climate change. Drastic changes in the Arctic climate have caused slumping, landslides, and severe erosion in coastal areas. With these ecological shifts, climate change is having a very real and immediate impact on communities that live in Alaska. Thinner sea ice with sudden thaws and later freezes make traditional practices of travel, hunting, harvesting, and communication between communities more dangerous and difficult. Decreased snow coverage makes hunting hazardous, forcing hunters to rely on cumbersome, colder tents instead of traditional igloos. The melting of permafrost, combined with more violent storms hitting the coastline that exacerbate erosion and flooding, puts homes, infrastructure, and livelihoods at risk. In extreme cases, such terrain devastation requires the relocation of entire communities. The marine species upon which the Inuit rely on for subsistence harvests and traditional knowledge transfer, including polar bears, walruses, ice-living seals, and many birds, are or will soon be in decline as a result of warmer temperatures and less sea ice. Some face extinction by the end of this century. Decreased access to traditional food sources force Inuit hunters to move to new, more dangerous locations that further exacerbate the travel issues resulting from climate change. These changes to traditional practices also affect the overall culture, as hunting provides spiritual and cultural affirmation, and is a key activity for passing skills, knowledge, and values from generation to generation.

**“A U.S. Security Strategy for the Arctic,” David Auerswald, War on the Rocks, 27 May 2021 [225] <https://warontherocks.com/2021/05/a-u-s-security-strategy-for-the-arctic/>**

#### Overview:

In March 2021, three Russian submarines simultaneously broke through the ice near the North Pole. Each boat could carry 16 ballistic missiles, and each missile could field multiple nuclear warheads. The submarines were soon joined by two MiG-31 aircraft and ground troops participating in Umka-2021, a Russian military exercise.

The exercise in March highlighted increased Russian military activity in the Arctic, but that was not the sole Russian signal. U.S. Alaska Command, under U.S. Northern Command, reported that they had intercepted more Russian military aircraft near the Alaska Air Defense Identification Zone in 2020 than at any other



time since the end of the Cold War. In April, Secretary of State Antony Blinken stated that Russia is trying “to exert control over new spaces. It is modernizing its bases in the Arctic and building new ones.” Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov responded by saying, “We hear whining about Russia expanding its military activities in the Arctic. But everyone knows that it’s our territory, our land.”

Russia is not the only authoritarian power with increased interest in Arctic affairs. In January 2018, Chinese officials published their first Arctic strategy document and attempted to buy and greatly expand Finland’s Kemijärvi air base for use by large Chinese aircraft, ostensibly for Arctic research. Their offer was rejected, supposedly because the northern airfield is next to Finland’s Rovajärvi artillery range. This fits a pattern. China has built Arctic research stations, conducted ongoing oceanographic surveys, and attempted infrastructure development across the region, projects that some believe have geostrategic or military purposes.

In order to better position the United States for geopolitical competition in the region, the Biden administration should write and publish a new national security strategy for the Arctic. The United States has a moribund 2013 Arctic strategy that was superseded by events and ignored by the Trump administration. In 2019, the Office of the Secretary of Defense released an Arctic strategy, and the Air Force, Navy and Army each released their own subordinate strategies. However, these individual strategies were not coordinated before being released, did not fully integrate efforts with civilian foreign policy agencies, and in some cases were produced only because of pressure from Sen. Dan Sullivan from Alaska.

It is time to rectify those omissions. A new Arctic security strategy should focus on deterring Russian and Chinese military attacks and preventing their attempts to weaken the established Arctic international order. To avoid mistakes from past Arctic national security, the Biden administration should build an Arctic strategy that responds to future security threats, can be resourced within constrained national budgets, and that integrates military and civilian actions across the government and private sector.

#### Current & Relevant Information:

#### **Goals for an Arctic Strategy**

Though the Biden administration has yet to release a National Defense Strategy and National Military Strategy, guideposts exist to begin conceptualizing a new Arctic security strategy. Blinken expressed the U.S. desire to keep the Arctic peaceful when speaking at the May 2021 Arctic Council ministerial meeting. The administration’s March 2021 Interim National Security Strategic Guidance focuses on deterring and preventing adversaries from threatening the United States and its allies, inhibiting access to the global commons, or dominating key regions (i.e., the Indo-Pacific, Europe, and the Western Hemisphere). Even though the document does not mention the region, its priority actions are applicable to the Arctic, such as

leading a stable and open international system underwritten by alliances, partnerships, multilateralism, and international rules.

Any new U.S. Arctic security strategy should have three goals: deter military attacks against U.S. or allied territory originating from the Arctic, prevent China or Russia from weakening existing rules-based Arctic governance through coercion, and prevent regional hegemony by either China or Russia. To accomplish these goals, U.S. strategy should develop military capabilities for use in the North American and European Arctic subregions and then demonstrate the ability to use them in harsh Arctic conditions. The U.S. government should persuade regional allies and partners that the United States can be a trusted security partner in the region. Finally, the strategy should contain inducements to the private sector to build dual-use Arctic infrastructure that benefits the private sector while giving the military platforms from which to observe and operate in the Arctic.

**“The Implications of U.S. Policy Stagnation toward the Arctic Region,” Heather A. Conley, Center for Strategic & International Studies, 3 May 2019 [226]**

<https://www.csis.org/analysis/implications-us-policy-stagnation-toward-arctic-region>

#### Overview:

The United States’ strategic position near Russia and neighboring Canada allows the U.S. access to the Beaufort Sea, the Chukchi Sea, and the Bering Sea and requires the United States to manage a lengthy maritime border with Russia that extends through the Bering Strait and Chukchi Sea into the Arctic Ocean as far as permitted under international law. The U.S. government has articulated its fundamental interest in the Arctic for more than 40 years in a series of government strategies: beginning with President Nixon’s 1971 National Security Decision Memorandum (NSDM-144), to Ronald Reagan’s 1983 National Security Decision Directive (NSDD-90), to President George W. Bush’s National Security Presidential Directive 66 and Homeland Security Presidential Directive 25, signed in 2009, and the 2016 Report to Congress from the Department of Defense on Strategy to Protect United States National Security Interests in the Arctic Region. Each document established broad guidelines for U.S. policy in the region that aligned with the geostrategic realities at the time.

Today, there are three major drivers that are shaping the Arctic:

1. Geopolitical drivers of great power competition with the largest Arctic coastal state Russia and a self-proclaimed “near Arctic state,” China;
2. Environmental drivers, which are simultaneously transforming the Arctic maritime and terrestrial space at rates that confound scientists while fueling the development of flexible governance structures; and,
3. Economic drivers that are highly correlated with global commodity prices.

U.S. policy toward the Arctic is driven by these factors as well as Alaska's important domestic economic role providing vital energy, mineral, and fishery resources. The Alaskan North Slope contains some of the country's largest oils fields and natural gas fields; the 2016 value of its mineral industry was \$2.83 billion; and fisherman landed \$5.4 billion of fish and shellfish in 2017. Alaska's economic activity has been subdued for the past several years due to lower global energy prices. The state must respond to increased coastal erosion necessitating village relocation, permafrost thaw, and fresh water scarcity which is dramatically altering traditional livelihoods.

The challenge for an overarching U.S. Arctic policy is that it must address all of these cross-cutting issues simultaneously: protect the homeland, pursue environmental adaptation and resilience, and address global economic and security dynamics while engaging in anticipatory policymaking. U.S. government strategies and documents for the Arctic are largely descriptive in nature, and they have yet to alter resource allocations (with the exception of recent congressional funding for one heavy-icebreaker, which will be predominantly used in Antarctica) or establish new organizational structures that can more efficiently address these cross-cutting issues. They also do not offer a clear set of priorities.

#### Current & Relevant Information:

### **The Stagnation of U.S. Arctic Policy under the Obama and Trump Administrations**

Despite the relentless pace of the three major drivers, U.S. policy toward the Arctic has remained largely stagnant over the past decade with a continued emphasis on science and international collaboration. In other words, the United States "makes do" by "making it work." This has been particularly true for the U.S. Coast Guard, the lead U.S. agency with responsibilities for protecting the American Arctic and securing maritime waterways. Despite over a decade of studies and assessments, the U.S. Coast Guard continues to rely on outdated capabilities and thinly resourced budgets, which equates to a seasonal U.S. Coast Guard presence (July-October) in the American Arctic. Should an incident occur in the American Arctic, it is hoped that it happens during this season and preferably near a pre-positioned U.S. maritime asset. Years of underinvestment now leaves the United States ill-prepared as other nations prioritize the region as one of future geostrategic value.

One of the most significant moments in the Arctic's geopolitical development occurred in 2013 when China was invited to become a permanent observer to the Arctic Council. This decision, combined with the emergence of Chinese President Xi Jinping as China's leader and the implementation of the Belt and Road Initiative, gave China greater impetus to be more economically, diplomatically, and scientifically visible in the Arctic. This occurred at the same moment when the Obama administration was preparing in earnest for its chairmanship of the Arctic Council (2015-2017).

Since 2009, the Obama administration largely viewed the Arctic region as an alarming and persuasive example of the need to elevate climate change as a national security imperative. The U.S. administration created new administration positions (e.g., a U.S. special representative to the Arctic Region and an executive director of the Arctic Executive Steering Committee) largely to manage its Arctic Council Chairmanship to give the Arctic issue greater public visibility and engage more closely with the state of Alaska. The Obama administration also increased the size of federally protected lands and waters in the American Arctic to minimize development that could adversely impact its environmental protection efforts. Much of this work built up to August 2015 when President Obama became the first president to visit the Alaskan Arctic in part to chair the Global Leadership in the Arctic Cooperation, Innovation, Engagement, and Resilience (GLACIER) conference, which brought together 20 foreign ministers, including those from Arctic nations and Arctic Council observer nations, to call for immediate international action to tackle climate change. China and Russia did not sign the GLACIER declaration.

President Obama's three-day Arctic visit formed the basis of the U.S. priorities during its chairmanship of the Arctic Council (2015-2017): improving economic and living conditions in Arctic communities; Arctic Ocean safety, security, and stewardship; and addressing the impacts of climate change. But as a reminder of the growing geopolitical dynamics in the region, President Obama's Alaskan visit occurred simultaneously with a large Sino-Russian naval exercise off the coast of Vladivostok, Russia in which Alaskans were greeted by 5 Chinese naval vessels off the Aleutian Islands.

The Trump administration concluded the U.S. Arctic Council chairmanship without significant change, but the administration began to disassemble the Obama administration's Arctic-specific administrative structures, emphasized economic development, and dismissed climate impacts in the region. The U.S. budget dedicated to Arctic science and research has remained largely intact due to bipartisan congressional support, and U.S. secretaries of state continue to attend Arctic Council ministerial meetings. The Trump administration has re-opened onshore and offshore areas in the American Arctic for development such as the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge (ANWR) to oil and gas drilling with expedited environmental review although judicial review has slowed this process. New offshore leases in the Chukchi Sea have been made available, and the administration is working to promote oil exploration beneath ANWR's coastal plain along the Beaufort Sea in what is thought to be the largest untapped onshore oil deposit in North America. In 2017, the governor of Alaska signed a Joint Development Agreement with China worth an estimated \$43 billion to develop Alaskan liquified natural gas (LNG) for export to China.

Despite this greater desire for and receptivity to Arctic economic development, U.S. Arctic infrastructure remains very limited and will inhibit economic development. The

closest U.S. deep-water port is Dutch Harbor in the southern Bering Sea, which is over 800 miles from the Bering Strait. The lack of icebreaking capabilities is one of the most glaring of U.S. capability gaps, but the U.S. Coast Guard recently selected a firm to construct a polar security cutter which should be in service by 2024. As transits through the Bering Strait have more than doubled over the past decade, there is also an urgent need for greater communications assets and maritime domain awareness capabilities, particularly through the narrow Bering Strait.

One consistent success for U.S. policy in the Arctic is the question of governance. The United States has quietly and effectively engaged with the Russian government to introduce to the International Maritime Organization (IMO) a Vessel Traffic Management System for the Bering Strait, which took effect on December 1, 2018. It is the first internationally recognized ship routing measure approved by the IMO for polar waters. The United States also worked diligently at the IMO to secure a mandatory Polar Code, which came into force in January 2017. Finally, the United States, working closely with the other four coastal states, negotiated a preemptive fisheries moratorium for the high seas of the Central Arctic Ocean and brought together four other fishing nations (China, Korea, Japan, and Iceland) and the European Union to join that agreement (the CAOFA 5+5 Agreement).

#### Social Issues:

**“Alaska, in ‘hard-core survival mode,’ is America’s worst state for business in 2021,” Scott Cohn, CNBC, 15 July 2021 [227]**

<https://www.cnbc.com/2021/07/13/why-oil-rich-alaska-is-americas-bottom-state-for-business.html>

#### Overview:

- Squandered opportunities, high costs — and historically low oil production — leave Alaska at the bottom of this year’s state competitiveness rankings.
- Last year, weak demand during the pandemic pushed oil prices to historic lows, but even as prices rebounded this year, oil production in Alaska has not.
- This is the sixth time in 14 years that Alaska has finished last in CNBC’s annual Top States for Business study.

These are tough times in Skagway, Alaska, population 1,183.

“We’re in hard-core survival mode,” Mayor Andrew Cremata told CNBC.

In a normal summer, the Southeast Alaska town would be teeming with tourists from the cruise ships sailing the Inside Passage. Residents could drive 15 miles up the Yukon Highway into Canada to run their basic errands, or they could hop on a state-run ferry to the next town over, Haines.

But this year, the cruise ships have just started running again. Cremata is hoping Skagway will see 100,000 passengers this year; in 2019 they had 1.1 million. The

border to Canada remains closed to non-essential traffic, and the ferries, part of the Alaska Marine Highway System, are plagued by budget cuts.

“Just getting your family down to go see a dentist or doctor, when that becomes burdensome or overly expensive, there’s a point where people have just had it and move away,” Cremata said.

Multiply Skagway’s situation by thousands of communities and more than 700,000 Alaskans, and you can begin to understand why The Last Frontier finds itself in last place in CNBC’s 2021 America’s Top States for Business rankings.

It is the sixth bottom-state finish for Alaska in 14 years. The state previously achieved the dubious distinction in the first four years of the study between 2007 and 2010, hitting bottom again in 2018.

As difficult as the past year has been in this state and across the country, it presented opportunities that Alaska failed to capitalize on.

Alaska met the pandemic with the best-funded public health system in the nation, according to the United Health Foundation, spending \$289 per person per year. That is more than three times the national average. Earlier this year, the state was setting the pace for Covid-19 vaccinations, even in its most remote regions.

As the national economy struggled to regain its footing, Alaska offered a generally business-friendly regulatory climate — its legal system tilts toward business, and the number of state laws and regulations is manageable. The conservative-leaning Tax Foundation ranks Alaska’s tax climate the third-best in the country.

In Skagway, Mayor Cremata said state and federal officials have been extremely helpful through the crisis.

“They are always ready and willing not only to engage us as a community, but individual people and business owners in the community. People that were struggling with problems with unemployment and all these kinds of things,” he said.

And at a time of social upheaval, Alaska offered its relatively varied population some strong protections against discrimination.

#### Current & Relevant Information:

#### **High costs hurt Alaska**

So how did Alaska manage to finish No. 50 again in 2021 despite so many advantages going in? In a word: cost.

Cost of Doing Business carries the most weight in this year’s study. As the recovery builds, states are touting low business costs more than any other factor, according to CNBC’s analysis. Alaska is an extremely expensive place to do business.

Even Alaska's competitive tax climate, which earns points for relatively low property taxes and no personal income tax, includes a top corporate tax rate of 9.4%, among the highest in the country.

Utility costs are oppressive. Alaskans paid an average of 20.20 cents per kilowatt hour for electricity last year, according to U.S. Department of Energy data, with even higher rates in remote areas. That was second only to Hawaii, and nearly double the national average. Wages are high thanks to the high cost of living, and office and industrial space — which are in short supply — is pricey.

Cremata said he is worried about how the price of everything seems to be creeping higher.

"Everything's barged in," he said. "And so, if the cost of fuel goes up, it affects the rates on the barge and that affects the price of your milk and eggs."

Indeed, even that high rate of public health funding may be deceiving, because health care in Alaska is so expensive. An office visit to a doctor in Anchorage averaged more than \$206 last year, according to the Council for Community and Economic Research, C2ER. That is more than twice the cost in Phoenix, Arizona.

Meanwhile, Alaska's Covid-19 vaccination rate, once the envy of the nation, has fallen below the national average, according to data from the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

In March, Alaska became the first state in the nation to make vaccines available to everyone aged 16 and older. Officials theorize that meant those who wanted to be vaccinated were quick to get their shots, leaving vaccine-hesitant residents — many in rural or remote areas — who have proven difficult to convince.

Vaccination rates are a metric in the Top States' Life, Health and Inclusion category, where Alaska finishes No. 19 this year.

### **Internet access remains a challenge**

In addition to its cost issues, Alaska ranks No. 49 in the Top States' Infrastructure category, above only Maine. It is yet another lost opportunity. Alaska might have been able to use the nation's move toward remote work to partly offset its inherent infrastructure disadvantages, which include its distance from the rest of the country and its vast size.

This year's Top States study introduced broadband connectivity as an infrastructure metric. But broadband in Alaska is the worst in the nation, according to BroadbandNow Research.

In Skagway, Cremata said internet service is cumbersome and expensive.

“You have to actually have a landline in your house for it to work,” he said. “So, the internet has a pretty substantial price to it, but then you also have a \$30 charge because you need a landline for the broadband to work.”

According to BroadbandNow, fewer than 61% of Alaskans have access to broadband at all, and none have access to a low-priced plan, which the organization defines as costing less than \$60 per month. The average speed is a paltry 58.6 Mbps, or one-third the speed in the top-ranked state, New Jersey.

Cremata said that early in the pandemic, when he and other local leaders worried the cruise ships could disappear for five years, they convened a task force to consider ways to reinvent the economy. One of the ideas was to make Skagway an internet hub, but it went nowhere.

“You’d have to have really fast internet, obviously, because you probably want to have all of your communications done in the cloud, which is pretty much impossible right now in Skagway,” he said.

In May, Gov. Mike Dunleavy created a task force to recommend ways to improve connectivity in the state.

“On the heels of a global pandemic, now more than ever do we see the critical role that the internet plays in nearly every part of life and the importance of good connectivity for every Alaskan,” Dunleavy said in a statement.

But it is Alaska’s third broadband task force in the last decade, with little to show for the efforts. It is also unclear whether the state can muster the funding needed to bring its service up to date.

In his statement announcing the task force, Dunleavy, a Republican, emphasized the use of federal pandemic relief money to pay for the expansion. And while his administrative order creating the task force also contemplates using state funds, Dunleavy and the state legislature are already locked in a titanic struggle over the budget.

This month, Dunleavy vetoed more than \$200 million in state spending approved by the legislature, with cuts aimed at everything from tourism marketing to mental health services.

Dunleavy also vetoed \$8.5 million in funding for Alaska’s ferry system known as the Alaska Marine Highway System, a link to the outside world for communities like Skagway.

And he relentlessly slashed the University of Alaska’s budget, with cuts totaling \$70 million over three years. That hurts the state’s ranking in Education, where it finishes No. 47.

**Crude oil rebound hasn’t helped Alaska**



Hanging over all of Alaska's business and financial woes is the price of oil, the state's economic lifeblood. Oil revenues typically account for more than one-third of the state's budget.

Last year, as weak demand during the pandemic pushed oil prices to historic lows, oil production in Alaska fell to its lowest level in more than 40 years, according to the Energy Department.

This year, prices have rebounded, but production in Alaska has not. Alaska oil producers face much lower cost competition in the lower 48, as well as an intensifying tug-of-war over federal oil leases. Production through April was down nearly 5% from a year ago.

State budget forecasters expect oil production tax revenue will be around \$311 million in the 2021 fiscal year that ended on July 1. That would be a 9% increase from 2020, but a 36% decline from the year before.

Those kinds of numbers could make it even harder for Alaska to climb out of the cellar next year.

Cremata said he hopes the crisis will convince Alaska to think beyond its traditional economic drivers including tourism, fishing and oil.

"You can't think backwards. You have to think forwards," he said. "Perhaps, this is like a chaos-opportunity moment — where there's chaos, there's opportunity, so that people in Alaska, who maybe have been relying on things that aren't as reliable anymore, maybe try to expand towards some different ideas."

**"Alaska's mental health crisis is at the heart of the state's issues," Ryan Binkley, et al., Anchorage Daily News, 17 November 2018 [228]**

<https://www.adn.com/opinions/editorials/2018/11/18/alaskas-mental-health-crisis-is-at-the-heart-of-the-states-issues/>

#### Overview:

There can be no doubt that Alaska's mental health care system is in crisis, struggling to cope with some of the greatest gaps in capacity and coverage in decades. At the state's flagship Alaska Psychiatric Institute, almost half the rooms are empty, a problem that has persisted for several years. The consequences are tremendous, and damaging at both the personal and societal scales. And although Alaska is facing a host of pressing issues — a substantial budget deficit, the future of the Permanent Fund dividend and nation-highest rates of domestic violence and sexual assault — the state's mental health services may be the most glaring, broken system facing Alaska. Gov.-elect Mike Dunleavy and the Legislature should make addressing it a top priority.

#### Current & Relevant Information:

It's not as though this is a new problem for the state. For years, the ADN's reporters and columnist Charles Wohlforth have examined the breakdowns and failures that have led us to where we are today. But despite the acknowledged severity of the issues, which led to the September resignations of major figures charged with overseeing the state's system, there has been little progress made — in fact, it's easy to make the argument that things are worse now than at any point in recent memory. At least a half-dozen patients committed to the state's care for mental health issues were sent to prison because of capacity problems at API. When patient treatment begins to resemble the “warehousing” model of asylums, there can be no denying that serious problems exist and must be addressed immediately.

So, what has caused the degradation of Alaska's mental health services? There are many factors, but two primary ones stand out: organizational and managerial failures, as well as tight budgets. Although the state has tried to address organizational issues, most recently through the aforementioned resignations, there is little to show for the periodic shakeups: API's issues have persisted for years. Also, the past two decades has seen atrophy in Alaska's community mental health services, which has the compounding effect of increasing the burden on API, as well as on hospitals and other care facilities not designed for chronic mental health treatment.

The failures within Alaska's mental health care system are not only distressing with regard to our goal of helping those in need of services to maintain their health and dignity, they are tremendously costly to our state. Facilities such as hospitals and prisons, which have neither the capacity nor the mission to provide chronic, long-term mental health care, are being pressed into service. The half-operative API can't come near addressing the mental health needs of Anchorage's population, much less the many remote communities without such services. As a result, those with unaddressed mental health issues often experience homelessness, and some are the perpetrators and victims of crimes. They are more likely to abuse substances because of their unmet health needs. All of these factors drive other major, expensive problems our state is struggling to address.

**“Alaska's real problems,” Craig Medred, [craigmedred.news](https://craigmedred.news/2016/09/20/alaskas-real-problems/), 20 September 2016**  
[229] <https://craigmedred.news/2016/09/20/alaskas-real-problems/>

#### Overview:

Mareesa Nicosia is a reporter from New York who journeyed to the tiny, Alaska village of Newtok late this summer to write about global warming because global warming is trending.

Newtok is in all ways about as far as one can get from New York, and it is said to be on the front lines of climate change. Situated on the wet, lake-pocked Yukon-Kuskokwim River delta of far Western Alaska about 500 miles northwest of

Anchorage, Newtok has pretty much always been on the front lines of climate change.

There are good reasons the Yupik who took over this corner of Alaska a couple thousand years ago were still largely nomadic up until the 1940s when World War II became the first truly global conflict and sent waves of technological change around the planet that ripple to this day.

But that isn't what Nicosia went to Newtok to write about. She went to Newtok to write about education and climate change, or climate change and education, because climate change is the story of the day and she works for a website called the The74Million.org which specializes in education. Its founding principle as stated on its website is "74 million kids. 74 million reasons to talk education."

And Nicosia wrote well about the importance of the school in Newtok, where as in many other villages of the north, it is the center of community life. The school is where village kids go to play basketball, now the favorite sport of rural Alaska. The school is where community events are held and movies screened.

In Newtok, Nicosia wrote, "the school is the only building in the village with flush toilets and showers (two for men, two for women). The homes here do not have indoor plumbing or running water, so young men are sent to haul five-gallon jugs of water from the school every day.

"When there's a funeral, the gym is where residents gather to eat and mourn. And when other areas of the village flood — as they do almost every year now — the school, as Newtok's highest point, is where residents go to shelter."

Nicosia does a good job of underlining the importance of the school to the community, if not to education, before touching the usually untouchable.

#### Current & Relevant Information:

#### **Alaska's biggest problems**

Thirty-one paragraphs into a long but very readable story, Nicosia throws this out there:

"More than a third of Newtok residents live below the federal poverty line, according to 2010 census data — although the number is likely higher now, officials said. Newtok is legally a dry town, but alcoholism and drug abuse are widespread. School officials say it's not unusual for parents to leave their children to look after each other while they drink away their annual permanent fund dividend check — every Alaska resident received \$2,072 in 2015 — in Bethel or Anchorage."

Right here, it needs to be said that the drinking, drug abuse and bad parenting are not unique to Newtok. To greater or lesser degrees, these are problems in many Alaska villages and along the rural parts of the Alaska road system and in the state's

few real cities. Throw in the associated problem of sexual/physical abuse in all these areas, and you have the unholy triad of Alaska problems.

Nicosia's observations seem almost a throwaway in a long story about how government needs to help Newtok move. Still, she is to be commended for at least noting the reality. Most reporters don't. They parachute into rural Alaskan with a vision of a rural nirvana and somehow manage to leave with that vision intact.

Rural Alaska is, indeed, the best of Alaska, but it can also be the worst. It can be tough to live out there for many reasons, which is why people leave.

"The pursuit of economic and educational opportunities appears to be a predominant cause of migration," researchers at the University of Alaska's Institute of Social and Economic Research (ISER) concluded in a 2008 study. "However, currently available survey data are not sufficient to definitively determine other reasons for migration, which could include concerns about public safety and/or alcohol abuse."

The study was funded in large part to look at the mind-bogglingly high costs of fuel in rural Alaska and find out if that was driving out-migration. The study concluded it wasn't.

"People move to improve their lives," the study authors wrote.

There are those, many in the media, who would prefer people stay. Reporter after reporter after reporter has shipped off to Newtok, Kivalina or Shishmaref in recent years to write about the problems these communities face due to coastal erosion, and how they should be "saved" by government-paid relocations designed to cement them in place

Almost none of these reporters have mentioned the massive problems these and other villages already face due to poverty and lack of parenting. Nicosia at least touches on it before moving on to more climate change.

**"'Clash of Cultures' at Root of Alaska's Health Disparities," Gaby Galvin, US News, 7 December 2017 [230] <https://www.usnews.com/news/healthiest-communities/articles/2017-12-07/despite-improvements-alaskas-health-disparities-persist>**

#### Overview:

In 2015, Alaska Natives had the same average life expectancy as Americans in 1960.

Nothing grows more than a few inches in Barrow, Alaska, the northernmost town in the Western Hemisphere. Set on permafrost, the closest tree lies 200 miles to the south, and no roads exist to lead visitors there.

This North Slope Borough town, where about 60 percent of the 4,300 residents are Alaska Natives, has traditionally been a subsistence hunting and fishing community,

with the roughly 25 bowhead whales the community harvests annually serving as the centerpiece of their diet and culture.

This approach worked for them in the past. But the oil and gas production boom that brought wealth to the North Slope Borough in the 1970s has also brought in more unhealthy western foods, causing a spike in diabetes, obesity and other health concerns. (Despite a general decline in oil and gas production over the past decade, the region reaped nearly \$350 million in property taxes alone in 2014.)

"The traditional diet is much, much healthier, so we strongly promote the cultural values and cultural diet – the birds, the fish, the whales, the seals, the walrus, the caribou," says Luke Welles, a vice president of the Arctic Slope Native Association who has lived in Barrow for seven years. "One of the unfortunate things is when money comes in ... it really hurts the hunting and subsistence lifestyle, so you end up with more obesity and more weight issues and physical activity declines."

#### Current & Relevant Information:

Barrow is not alone with its health challenges. While specific problems vary by region and culture, these issues generally mirror those in other rural tribal areas in the state in what Welles described as a "clash of cultures" between traditional Alaskan and American lifestyles.

With a population density of about one person per square mile, Alaskans face health challenges unlike anywhere else in the U.S. But like the rest of the nation – "Outside," as the lower 48 states are called there – these challenges underscore the pervasive socioeconomic and health disparities that exist between Alaska Natives and other populations in the state.

Statewide, about one in five residents is Alaska Native, but in some rural areas that figure is much higher, meaning geographic and ethnic health divides are intrinsically linked, Welles says. Economic systems, traditional cultural behavior and access to services within rural Alaska further divide the tribes, adding to the complexity of solving health issues.

#### **"Protecting Alaska's greatest salmon fishery," Wild Salmon Center [231]**

<https://wildsalmoncenter.org/campaigns/bristol-bay/>

#### Overview:

Bristol Bay is home to one of the most important wild salmon fisheries on Earth. Annual sockeye salmon returns here top 60 million fish, feeding a wide variety of wildlife and human communities, from grizzly bears to Alaska Native families to a globally important commercial fishery.

But the Pebble Mine threatens all of that.

#### Current & Relevant Information:

## **The Mine**

One of the greatest threats to Alaskan salmon is the proposed Pebble Mine at the headwaters of the Nushagak and Kvichak rivers in the Bristol Bay region. If constructed, Pebble would be one of the world's largest open pit copper/gold/molybdenum mines, with an earthen dam 60-stories tall that would ultimately hold up to 10 billion tons of toxic tailings and contaminated water — forever. The mine and tailings lake would sit just north of Iliamna Lake, the largest lake in Alaska and one of the most important sockeye salmon nurseries in the world.

## **What's at Stake**

Hanging in the balance is a \$2 billion-a-year salmon fishing economy and an important subsistence food source for Bristol Bay communities.

Commercial salmon fishing in Bristol Bay employs more than 15,000 people every year, from seasoned boat captains to young deckhands paying their way through college to workers in processing facilities.

The commercial fishery supplies as much as 57% of the world's sockeye salmon catch, driving \$990 million in economic activity in Alaska alone, and \$800 million in induced impacts for the Pacific Northwest. Sportfishing tourism brings in at least \$75 million a year to the local economy and draws fishermen and women from the around the world.

Subsistence salmon fishing for 31 federally recognized Alaska Native tribes in Bristol Bay continues a tradition several thousand years old. Salmon is a critical food source — up to 65% of protein consumed in rural Alaska communities comes from salmon.

**“The Stingiest State in the Union,” Alana Semuels, *The Atlantic*, 31 August 2015**  
[232] <https://www.theatlantic.com/business/archive/2015/08/alaska-budget-crisis/402775/>

### Overview:

Alaska—This state has more money in the bank than most small countries. Decades of collecting royalties and revenues from the companies that drilled for oil on its slopes have endowed Alaska with a \$50 billion savings account. Residents pay neither income nor sales tax, and every October, they get a check from the government simply for living in Alaska—this year, the check could total \$2,000.

But the years of plenty may be coming to an end. As the price of oil has fallen from more than \$100 a barrel to around \$40 and oil production slows, Alaska is seeing the downside of relying on natural resources to pay the bills. For every \$5 drop in oil prices, the state loses \$120 million, according to Randall Hoffbeck, Commissioner of the Alaska Department of Revenue.

### Current & Relevant Information:

For years, 90 percent of the state's general-fund budget was supported by oil revenues (now it's closer to around 85 percent). Now, after years of depending on oil companies, Alaskans are faced with the prospect of actually having to pay for the basics, such as roads and universities, themselves. It's going to be a difficult shift.

"People are used to paying little or nothing for their government services," Hoffbeck said. "It's just going to be a change of mindset."

Just how to get residents to cough up money in one of the most conservative, anti-tax states in the union is another question. General fund revenues have fallen around \$6 billion, or 81 percent, since 2012, according to Gunnar Knapp, a professor of economics at the University of Alaska, Anchorage. And already, Standard & Poor's downgraded its outlook for Alaska from "stable" to "negative" because of the state's fiscal woes.

"Everybody realizes we just can't go on like this. We cannot keep running deficits of this size. Our savings are going to run out soon, unless we do something drastic," Knapp told me. The state spends about \$6.1 billion a year, but is expected to bring in just \$2.2 billion this year, leaving a gaping deficit. It needs to either make more money, or spend a lot less.

There are a few obvious options to filling the hole, but none of them are politically palatable. One is to cut the budget. The state legislature already tried to do that at the start of the fiscal year in July, slashing \$600 million in spending. It decreased the capital budget, which is used to build roads and schools, and cut back education spending and marine ferry service. As part of the cuts, the Alaska Bureau of Investigations shut down its four-person Cold Case unit. But it soon became clear that the state couldn't cut its way out of its budget problems, since even those relatively small cuts were extremely unpopular. School children and teachers protested education cuts outside state legislative buildings in April, and some even staged a sit-in. After an uproar after funding to a state homelessness program was cut, Governor Bill Walker, an independent, restored some of the cuts. Residents of Cordova, a town only accessible by plane or boat, rallied against cuts to the Marine Highway, a ferry system linking Alaska's coastal communities.

Alaska is the only state in the union besides New Hampshire without sales or income tax. Levying taxes would be a quick way to bring in revenue, but Republican lawmakers have been quick to call for more spending cuts before any new taxes are introduced.

"As we continue down the trail of talking about other kinds of revenues, we have folks where I come from saying we haven't even begun to scratch the surface," Lynn Gattis, a Wasilla state Representative, told the Alaska Dispatch News.

New budget negotiations will begin in 2016, but that's also an election year, which means that legislators will likely be even more reticent to push for cuts or new taxes.

Which leads to what has often been a third rail in Alaska politics—the state's Permanent Fund. The Permanent Fund was created by a constitutional amendment in 1976 at a time when the state was making so much money from oil revenues it didn't know what to do with it. The idea behind the fund was to save much of this money for future generations, in case the oil money ever dried up.

The Fund's value is now more than \$50 billion. The state is only allowed to spend the earnings from the fund, which is invested in various stocks, bonds, and real estate. Those earnings usually amount to about \$2 to 3 billion a year, a figure that is expected to increase (The state also has a separate Constitutional Budget Reserve, worth about \$10 billion now, that was funded by the state surpluses in the boom years of the mid-2000s).



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